

# YEAR PLAN

MSU Spark Coordinator

Anika Spasov

2019-2020

(submitted June 2nd, 2019)



## OFFICE OF THE SPARK COORDINATOR INTRODUCTION

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To the members of the Executive Board,

Firstly, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Anika and I'm going into my fourth year here at McMaster. I'd also like to thank you all for providing me the opportunity to share my passions and the support to help my ideas grow and further Spark as a service.

The transition into university can be a pivotal time for many students. Spark aims to empower students and help them form their own support networks as they move through first year. I strive to use this service to create a positive and engaging community for first-years; in doing so, first-years and Team Leaders alike can learn from each other. I strongly believe Spark has a valuable and welcoming impact on students, and plan to strengthen this by solidifying and expanding the structure of the service.

Spark has played a cardinal role in my personal development since coming to McMaster. I trust the value of mentorship the service provides and see the potential the service holds. Through my various interactions with the service, both as a first-year and a volunteer, I have seen how Spark has developed over the past few years. Now, as Coordinator, I aim to help the service engage with more students, collaborate with various groups around campus, and provide an opportunity for further growth to volunteers and first-years alike.

I am currently working with Welcome Week Planners and faculty-specific 'buddy' programs to better promote Team Leader applications to faculties Spark has historically underrepresented. Additionally, I am changing the number of session groups and offering some from 4:00-5:30pm to accommodate for commuter students. Further, I am in active discussions with both the SSC in regards to supporting first-generation students, as well as SAS. Through these changes, I hope Spark can better cater to the needs of the entire first year population and increase student engagement with the service.

The service has already expanded its Executive team to include a new role, the Outreach & Engagement Coordinator. This new position will overlook the Spark Ambassador program and gain sponsorships, which the service has never done before. In order to further Spark's outreach, I have also been in active communication with Residence Life staff and providing input on their Residence Life Curriculum. The weekly

structure of sessions can be both hard to commit to and intimidating for some first-year students. I am introducing ‘mini-sessions’ in residences that will target the specific needs outlined by students and the Residence Life Curriculum, allowing students to experience the benefits from engaging with the service. This will also act as in-direct promotion for events and the weekly sessions program.

This Year Plan incorporates the thoughts and ideas of my talented Executive Team and I am extremely excited to share it with you all. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Anika Spasov  
 Spark Coordinator 2019/2020  
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**Goals/Objectives**  
 (calendar and checklist)

MAY	
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Establish a consistent structure for weekly executive meetings and bi-weekly check-ins
Why:	Routines are useful for staying organized and on top of a schedule. This routine will include posting a meeting agenda for executive members to review beforehand, starting each meeting with “life updates” to fill each other in on our lives outside of Spark (aiming to develop strong relationships among the team), and portfolio updates to fill each other in on our respective portfolios. We also end each meeting with ‘Action Items’ to discuss what we will each work on for the next week. By establishing a consistent structure for Spark weekly meetings, expectations will be set for the rest of the year and will help executive members to feel ready for each meeting. During the summer, we currently meet Tuesdays at 7pm
Difficulties:	Ensuring meetings are efficient and productive while maintaining a fun and casual atmosphere; getting through everything in meetings when Facebook/technology can cause difficulties
Partners:	Whole executive team (and sometimes other folks if they are joining the call, such as Alex Johnston for budget tips and training)

<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Submit WWSTAPC proposals and brainstorm Welcome Week engagement
Why:	This year, one of the goals of the service is to expand our presence during Welcome Week in order to familiarize first-years with Spark. We have planned some events, such as Therapy Dogs/Dog Toy Making, Canvas Painting and some table games, which need additional funding. Thus, we have submitted a few proposals to the Welcome Week Strategic Themes Advisory and Planning Committee to hopefully garner this financial support.
Difficulties:	We may not actually be approved for this funding, which will add to an already tight budget. It also means we have had to accelerate some timelines, as we had to have the events fully thought-out prior to the proposal submissions.
Partners:	Outreach & Engagement Coordinator (Negar Asli), Events Coordinators (Esther Arase, Heba Shahaed), WWSTAPC Members, ROP (Jessica Loiseau), WWFC (Raquel Munoz), OCOP (Jillian Kew)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Confirm TL application questions and hiring schedule. As well as revamp hiring process
Why:	In order to run the aforementioned events, we must have a team hired earlier in the year. Traditionally, interviews have occurred during the 3rd week of August, but we will need to confirm a team prior to this in order to form rotational schedules for the events. Additionally, we are implementing an Events Committee optional question into the application to engage Team Leaders with the service more and to help the Events Coordinators with planning. Furthermore, we are reaching out to Welcome Week Faculty Planners, ROAs and Faculty Societies to promote applications to a broader audience and improve representation on the team.
Difficulties:	This has moved up our timeline a lot, by almost a month. Consequently, our promotional training and planning has had to move quickly. Interviews in July also likely mean less applicants will be Hamilton during that time. This means we will likely have more call-in interviews. However, I have been exploring the possibility of using Google Hangouts in order to keep the group-portion of the interview for those who cannot attend in person.
Partners:	Promotions & Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay), entire Exec team, Wooder and Connor, Maddison Hempel, Sarah Figueiredo (VP Admin)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Get to know my Exec team and make genuine connections! We're planning a trip in June to go to Toronto Island which I'm super pumped for! Also,

	just to familiarize myself with MSU staff, other PTMs and just the structure of processes.
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<b>JUNE</b>	
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<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Begin working on Sponsorship packages and goals for Spark
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Why:	Spark as a service has never explored the possibility of receiving sponsorships. This year, I plan to gain some extra revenue for things such as Formal and sessions materials. The new Outreach & Engagement Coordinator will primarily be taking on this role, first looking at internal sponsorships (such as the President’s Office), then externally. We are also looking at targeted sponsorships/donations. For example, this year we will have a session of Food and Housing Security, which includes a cooking activity. Buying the ingredients for 200+ students is costly, so we will reach out to Fortinos and Food Basics for a sponsorship in the form of food ingredients. This will help fill the gaps in the budget.
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Difficulties:	The structure of Spark makes it difficult to offer formal sponsorships, where the sponsor usually gets something in return in the form of promotions. During Formal we can likely offer this, such as a slot on the back of the tickets, however it does not really fit in the sessions structure. Hence why we are focusing internally first, which will likely take on more the form of donations and targeted sponsorships for specific goals.
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Partners:	Outreach and Engagement Coordinator (Negar Asli), Promotions and Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay), potential sponsors
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<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Meet with MUSC and Clubspace regarding booking privileges. Then book Session rooms
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Why:	This past year, Spark had difficulties negotiating with MUSC in terms of receiving the requested amount of sessions rooms. MSU Services technically are eligible for 3 hours of booking space per week, however the structure of the weekly session requires more than this. Hopefully, we will be able to rebuild this relationship and maintain our booking schedule. This year, our Exec team also decided to change the number of session groups so it will be 16 groups of 14 students (4 groups per night), rather than 20 groups of 11 students (5 groups per night). This is in hopes of addressing issues of retention. Additionally, since we only need 4 rooms per night rather than 5, hopefully this will help expand our booking privileges with MUSC.
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Difficulties:	The difficulties are our past relationships with MUSC and issues of unused rooms being booked.
Partners:	Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Further consult services, group and organizations on-campus to help make Spark more accessible and fill gaps for first-years
Why:	While Spark has successfully engaged with a multitude of McMaster students, I believe certain audiences have been overlooked. As a service of the McMaster Student Union, it's important Spark represents and caters to the needs of the entire first year population. Some groups that come to mind are international students, who may have unique needs in terms of their transition experience. I will be in touch with International Student Services and discuss collaborating with their buddy program. Additionally, I plan to continue ongoing discussions with Student Accessibility Services in regards to creating a more accessible space within the Spark service. Also, I want to take a perspective on Spark that aims to fit the needs of First Generation students. Spark's mandate surrounds first year success and help students transition into university. This presents the service a unique opportunity to engage with First Generation students and cater to their experience. I have already had discussions with my Exec Team about how our work as a service, in every Exec role, should look at how we can better interact with and serve First Generation students. We should keep these students in our minds when we are planning our events, sessions, campaigns etc. However, I would like to consult the Student Success Centre for larger discussions.
Difficulties:	Some departments on campus have been difficult to reach and been slow at returning emails. I'm hoping by starting these conversations early, this may help mitigate this challenge
Partners:	SSC, OCRC, SAS, ISS, IS&S
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Complete enough planning so that the structure for the rest of the year is very clear and rooms/trainings/socials can be booked as far in advance as possible. As well, have a fun Exec Retreat in Toronto and continue getting to know the team! I also would like to help facilitate more connections between Spark and the university, so other services and departments are familiar with the work we do and can refer us to students as a resource.

# JULY

<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Check-in with Residence Life regarding the Residence Life Curriculum and schedule dates for the year
Why:	The structure of the weekly sessions can be intimidating for students or is not feasible for their schedule. I would like to provide another opportunity for first-years to engage with the service via ‘mini-sessions offered in residence. I have been working with Sean Beaudette and providing feedback on the Residence Life Curriculum they are forming this year. Once it has been confirmed, we are going to choose specific targeted themes to offer in residences at certain times of the year. Rather than CAs running the sessions, our Spark Team Leaders will, which help alleviate some of the workload off of Residence Life Staff, which Sean says is mutually beneficial. Additionally, these ‘mini-sessions’ will act as a sort of sneak-peak for those who may not know our weekly session program exists and encourage them to register for Spark.
Difficulties:	This is a very new idea and includes a lot of moving parts and collaborations with Residence Life. The Curriculum will not be confirmed until mid-July, leaving us with a potentially short timeline to plan and orchestrate these mini-sessions.
Partners:	Residence Life (Sean Beaudette), Sessions Coordinators (Anjali Behal, Baila Lovejoy), Outreach & Engagement Coordinator (Negar Asli)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Book a venue for Spark Formal
Why:	Securing a venue and date for Spark Formal will allow the Events Coordinators and myself to begin filling in the many details associated with planning a formal event. Together we will be able to work backwards from the date of the formal and work with the Promotions and Publications Coordinator to develop a promotional strategy well in advance of the event. Last year Spark Formal was completely sold-out and has helped us identify strengths that helped it succeed. We plan to continue this success and make First Year Formal a staple event for students.
Difficulties:	Choosing a date when midterm exams and other significant events during the semester are not yet scheduled; choosing a venue that is within the budget, accessible to students, and ideal for the events planned
Partners:	Various banquet halls and other venues in Hamilton, Alex Johnston (MSU VP-Finance), Heba Shahaed & Esther Arase (Events Coordinators), past event planners

<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Hire Team Leaders who are representative of the entire first-year cohort
Why:	Choosing a diverse group of individuals as Spark TLs is an important responsibility of the Spark Exec team. With diversity comes diversity in experience and for the less experienced, joining the Spark team in a new role can be intimidating no matter how kind everyone is. Choosing TLs that have a range of leadership experience is very important to me because I believe we hold a very special opportunity to empower students to become leaders who may not have engaged in many or any leadership roles before.
Difficulties:	Identifying leadership potential in applicants who may not know the “buzzwords” and perfect responses to typical group interview questions and situationals.
Partners:	Other PTMs who have gone through a similar hiring process (eg. Clay), Sarah Figueiredo (MSU VP-Admin)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	See how I can better improve my communication skills and create welcoming, but efficient Exec meetings.

<b>AUGUST</b>	
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Increase Spark’s presence over the course of Welcome Week
Why:	Welcome week is a great opportunity for Spark to reach out and make itself known as a resource specifically for first year students. This year I plan on running a few events with Spark to help first-years make connections during Welcome, introduce them to various resources and promote the service. I also plan to have the tent move throughout the week and create a schedule of Team Leaders to help run it. By setting up a tent where TLs can hang out and chat with students, we can hopefully spread the word and demonstrate that Spark is a safe space for students to be supported through the challenges of first year. We will hopefully be able to get a lot of first year registration during Welcome Week so we can finalize Spark groups early in September. We also hope to use promotional strategies such as an MSU Instagram takeover and live Instagram and Facebook Q&As. This aims to maintain interest in Spark beyond the excitement of Welcome Week.
Difficulties:	Navigating the schedules of exec members and new TLs that may be involved in WW activities and already have responsibilities, being a memorable service when so many groups are also promoting their work during the week. I personally will be working full-time during Welcome

	Week and will rely heavily on my amazing Exec team to help orchestrate the events.
Partners:	Sarah Figueiredo (MSU VP-Admin), Raquel Munoz (WW Faculty Coordinator), Jessica Loiseau (Residence Orientation Planner), Sean Beaudette (Student Leadership & Learning of Residence Life), Student Success Centre, entire Spark Team
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Create an exciting and welcoming atmosphere for the newly hired Spark Team Leaders
Why:	Starting the year off with a positive atmosphere will help volunteers become excited and passionate about their role which will positively impact the first year students they interact with. By creating this atmosphere right away, TLs will hopefully help encourage first years they meet to register for Spark. This positive environment also serves the purpose of making Spark a highlight of each volunteer's week for the remainder of the year
Difficulties:	We will not be running training for our Team Leaders until early September, which will be after they help out at Welcome Week. Hopefully we can host a social prior to Welcome Week so some volunteers will get to meet each other beforehand.
Partners:	Executive Team
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Finalize digital campaigns/resources and revamp Spark's resource pillar
Why:	The past few years, Spark has created online guidebooks via Issuu. This has become quite expensive and has had low student engagement. This year, we plan on revamping the resources we provide by creating infographics that link to an article on our main MSU page. This will be structured similarly to the campaigns run by WGEN and Diversity Services. This way the resources will be compatible with a wide variety of social media (Instagram Facebook. Twitter) and increase student engagement with the information. These infographics could be paired with tags. For example, an infographic showcasing some of the great places Hamilton has to offer could have a caption that says "tag a friend you'd go to XXX with"
Difficulties:	Still being able to communicate the level and depth of knowledge as a guidebook provides.
Partners:	Promotions and Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay), Michael Wooder
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Prep in advance for August as its a very hectic month. Work on getting to know the new Team Leaders!

## SEPTEMBER

<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Register at least 224 (14 per group x 16 groups) students in the first term Spark weekly mentorship program
<b>Why:</b>	<p>This year we are changing the size and number of session groups slightly. Rather than 20 groups of 11, we will have 16 groups of 14-17. This is to account for the attrition we may experience and the drop of students we may have on the first week. In this case, if 15 students sign-up for a group and 4 don't come, this still leaves 11 students which is a great number.</p> <p>Additionally, based on the success of last year, I plan to continue to offer the sign-up-with-your friends option. Furthermore, we are working on making more meaningful promotions for registration. Students sometimes sign-up for the service without knowing what is fully is. By creating meaningful advertisements, the students who feel like they will benefit from the service will hear about it and register. Additionally, once we reach capacity for first semester, I will open up pre-registration for the Winter Term. Last year this worked out well and filled a quarter of our second semester spots during September. I also have garnered a list of over 50 student emails from May@Mac regarding registration for the sessions program. The Spark website also has an active survey where students can sign-up for our email list and be reminded to register for sessions come September.</p>
<b>Difficulties:</b>	An increase in session size runs the risk of Team Leaders being overwhelmed if all students attend a sessions
<b>Partners:</b>	Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi), Promotions and Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay), Sessions Coordinators (Anjali Behal, Baila Lovejoy)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Receive feedback from Execs and regular team socials
<b>Why:</b>	<p>At this point in the year, months have gone by and schedules change. I want to receive feedback from the Exec Team to see if there's anything I can do better moving forward into the school year. What is working and what is not. I plan to do this via an anonymous Google Form, but also discussing it during schedules weekly Exec meetings and bi-weekly check-ins. I also want to plan some smaller Exec socials throughout the semester, such as dinners, movie-nights, board games etc. As well, in addition to the large Team socials we hold, I want to create a space on the team where volunteers can casually meet up at 1280 or the library to study together to facilitate team bonding.</p>

Difficulties:	Finding times in everyone’s busy schedules when everyone is free
Partners:	Exec Team, Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Implement a ‘Pre-Sessions Event’
Why:	To address the gap between registration and sessions, I would like to host a ‘chill’ event the week before sessions begin. This would be something fun (and involve food, such as Lift pancakes), for example ‘Pancakes, Pictionary and Spark’. The event would be open to all first year students, but those registered in Spark will also receive an email, letting them know about the event and that it is a chance to meet their TLs and other students in their session group. Additionally, the event would have registration available on the spot for any open slots, or if anyone registered needs to switch nights
Difficulties:	It is unlikely every Team Leader will be available at the same time on a weeknight. While we can find a time that works bes for most volunteers, some Team Leaders will be unable to meet their students in advance.
Partners:	Events Coordinators (Esther Arase, Heba Shahaed), Outreach & ENGagement Coordinator (Negar Asli)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Staying calm when things don’t go according to plan and manage my time to avoid too much stress. Come up with a regular schedule and pencil in dedicated ‘Spark’ time and time to strictly do homework, other jobs, laundry etc.

<b>OCTOBER</b>	
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Finalize the last 5 “Next Week on Spark” videos
Why:	This year, Spark will be implementing a new promotional strategy to address the issue of lost retention. Each week there will be a short video filmed that will be shared to all the private Spark session Facebook groups (but likely not on the public Spark accounts). The video will show some highlights to expect from the following session week and entice students to keep attending. The first 5 will be filmed in June while we film our TL application promotional video and the last 5 will be filmed throughout trainings in first semester with Team Leaders.

Difficulties:	This will likely be time consuming and take lots of effort to maintain on a consistent basis
Partners:	Promotions and Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Begin 1-on-1 check-ins with all Spark Team Leaders
Why:	1-on-1 meetings provide the space for individuals to voice their concerns that they may not be comfortable bringing up in a group or without being prompted to talk about how they're feeling. This is also an excellent opportunity to collect feedback on sessions and events that the executive members can use when working on their portfolios
Difficulties:	Scheduling meetings with 40 volunteers is a large undertaking
Partners:	Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Open up Spark Ambassadors and solidify its structure
Why:	Spark Ambassadors are first year students involved in Spark's weekly mentorship program that can choose to become even more involved as a representative of the service. This initiative was re-introduced last year and was successful. Students who joined the group maintained engaged for the entirety of the semester. This year, the Outreach & Engagement Coordinator role was introduced to work closely with Spark Ambassadors and expand their involvement. Last year they were able to give incredibly beneficial feedback for sessions, promote our service and help plan some of the decorations for First Year Formal. However, most of the event planning occurs during the summer and I would like to give the Spark ambassadors a greater leadership opportunity. I am hoping we can collaborate with First Year Council on an event in the winter term which FYC and the Spark Ambassadors can take a lead on creating.
Difficulties:	Navigating many schedules to find a meeting time that works for most Spark Ambassadors (and First Year Council for some things), maintaining interest throughout the entire year
Partners:	Outreach & Engagement Coordinator (Negar Asli), First Year Council Coordinator (Grace Bryson)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Build meaningful relationships with the team of volunteers by attending weekly session training once a week, alternating with the Volunteer Coordinator

# NOVEMBER

<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Effectively promote Spark Formal (ideally sell out all tickets).
Why:	Spark Formal is an incredible opportunity to engage first year students socially, allow Spark groups to spend time together outside of session, and engage students who are not yet involved in the program. I have also been discussing with Sean Beaudette how Residence Life can help promote this event
Difficulties:	Promoting the event while other events are simultaneously being promoted, promoting the event as a valuable use of time (to socialize and take a break from studying) during the busy semester)
Partners:	Spark Ambassadors, Compass, First Year Council Coordinator (Grace Bryson), FYC members, the Underground Media & Design, Events Coordinators (Esther Arase, Heba Shahaed), Promotions and Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay), Sean Beaudette
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Make a sessions training into a mini-social
Why:	While the Spark socials planned by the Volunteer Coordinator are awesome and valuable because they occur during “non-Spark time”, I believe that using part of the hour every week reserved for sessions training is an excellent opportunity to enhance connections between volunteers in a social setting. Spark volunteer socials often have low attendance due to the busy schedule of students but by using the time volunteers have already accounted for, we can ensure TLs can make relationships with one another and build a strong team among all volunteers
Difficulties:	Ensuring there is enough time for the Sessions Coordinators to adequately train TLs on the upcoming session while also having a minisocial
Partners:	Sessions Coordinators (Baila Lovejoy, Anjali Behal)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Send out first year student feedback survey
Why:	In order to best meet the needs of first year students, its integral that Spark receives their feedback regarding sessions. This will also help the Sessions Coordinators in their development of sessions for Semester 2.
Difficulties:	It can be difficult to entice students to fill out a survey. We plan on running a draw for a giftcard to the Campus Store or The Grind for those who completed the survey, while also keeping the survey relatively short.

Partners:	Sessions Coordinators (Baila Lovejoy, Anjali Behal)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Stay engaged and focused on long-term Spark tasks that will allow second semester to run smoothly

<b>DECEMBER</b>	
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Host a holiday social to show volunteer appreciation
Why:	I want Spark Team Leaders to feel that their efforts do not go unnoticed and that all the time and energy they have invested over the past semester has really made an impact on their students. Making this event as accessible and enjoyable as possible will encourage TLs to come out to the social and enhance connections among volunteers who may not have seen one another since another social or the first Spark training
Difficulties:	Enticing volunteers to attend the social during the busy exam season, giving thoughtful gifts to TLs without spending too much of the budget
Partners:	Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Collect Mid-Year transition reports from executive members
Why:	This ensures that the “Running Transition Reports” are completed after a lot of tasks have been completed and Exec members have executed their plans. By having Execs fill these out mid-year, it ensures their thoughts and ideas are fresh and they can provide more information for the incoming executive members in April. By beginning this process early on, we can alleviate the stress of Exec members rushing to finish them at the end of April and effectively help the new team transition.
Difficulties:	Expecting a lengthy amount of writing during the busy month of December
Partners:	Executive Team
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Finalize the promotional plan for Term 2 Registration
Why:	January is a busy time of year that includes lots of promotions that are difficult to compete with on social media. I want to finalize our plan before

	the Winter Break, so once classes begin we can start right away. Last year we did some promo prior to January, but it was not entirely effective as students were kept busy with exams in holidays in December and too much time passed between registration and the onset of sessions
Difficulties:	Asking for a large promotional plan during exams
Partners:	Promotions & Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Relax during the winter break. Try to have things done prior to the holiday break so I can actually unwind and be ready to focus come January. I'd also like to have hired the new Spark PTM at this point, as it was beneficial for me to begin my transition early on

<b>JANUARY</b>	
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	FYC and Spark Ambassadors Event Collaboration
Why:	At the beginning of January, I plan to host an event open to all first year students, while also having Semester 2 Registration available on site. The design of this event would mostly be planned by First Year Council and the Spark Ambassadors. This collaboration would help forge a connection not only between Spark and FYC, but also between first year students. The event will also provide these students with an additional leadership opportunity to help them grow and development. Simultaneously, the event will help stimulate interest in Semester 2 Registration.
Difficulties:	There's a lot of people who would be collaborating on this and it may be difficult to orchestrate
Partners:	First Year Council Coordinator (Grace Bryson), Outreach & Engagement Coordinator (Negar Asli), Spark Ambassadors, FYC Members
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Register 200(+) students for second semester Spark
Why:	The past 2 years, Spark has struggled to register 100 students for Term 2 Spark, which has resulted in small session groups and low retention. This could be quite discouraging for Spark TLs who were eager to impact first year students and ended up having few to no students show up every week. Starting off the term with a large number of students ensures that even if

	students stop coming to Spark, the odds lean in favor of every group having a few students attend sessions.
Difficulties:	Students often feel they don't "need" Spark after finishing one semester of first year, students may now be involved in other organizations and don't feel they would have time for Spark, promoting Spark in January can be difficult due to Presidential Elections and applications that open during this time
Partners:	Underground Media & Design, Promotions & Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay), whole Spark Team
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Run a successful and motivating Winter Re-Training for Team Leaders
Why:	After one term of being a Spark TL, volunteers can get tired and begin to feel that Spark is a burden or just another box to check in their school week. I want to ensure that TLs feel supported and motivated throughout the year. By having a Re-Training that reminds TLs why they enjoy Spark and commit 4 hours every week to the service, we can hopefully inspire them to keep going and continue putting time and energy into the students they mentor.
Difficulties:	Planning a re-training that most TLs can attend, ensuring the re-training doesn't feel like nagging or feel patronizing to TLs
Partners:	Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Also host a little Spark Exec team get-together after the break! Get used to the new schedule and readjust

<b>FEBRUARY</b>	
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Begin Term 2 1-on-1 check-ins
Why:	Again, 1-on-1 meetings provide the space for individuals to voice their concerns that they may not be comfortable bringing up in a group or without being prompted to talk about how they're feeling. Continuing with these meetings in term 2 helps to demonstrate that we want to support volunteers throughout the year
Difficulties:	Scheduling 40 meetings, reluctance to actually plan a meeting when volunteers are busy with other commitments

Partners:	Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Recruit another group of Spark Ambassadors
Why:	While one of the main purposes of introducing Spark Ambassadors is to help with Term 2 registration and these new Spark Ambassadors wouldn't be able to help with that, it is still an incredible opportunity for first year students to become involved in something without having to face the application and interview aspect that may be intimidating and deter them from getting involved. It also provides the opportunity for current Spark Ambassadors to practice their leadership skills by welcoming and orienting the new Spark Ambassadors to the program
Difficulties:	Ensuring there are enough duties for all the Spark Ambassadors to help with in order to feel engaged
Partners:	Outreach & Engagement Coordinator (Negar Asli)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Finalize Semester 2 of 'Next Week on Spark' videos
Why:	Based on the success and implementation of this in first semester, I would like to continue it on to next semester. If feasible, I would also like to explore the possibility of including them on Instagram stories to increase engagement with our social media
Difficulties:	Time management and implementation
Partners:	Sessions Coordinators (Anjali Behal, Baila Lovejoy), Promotions & Publications Coordinator (Stephanie Kay)
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Keep a positive attitude and continue to motivate our team. This time of year can start feeling repetitive for students. I want to keep Spark as an exciting thing that myself, first-years and volunteers look forward to every week.

<b>MARCH</b>	
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Get feedback from students, Team Leaders and Exec members
Why:	Feedback! Feedback! Feedback! It's always valuable! Although our term will be nearing the end, this feedback is vitally important for the incoming

	Spark Executive team. I plan to create multiple surveys for Spark students, Ambassadors, Team Leaders and Exec members. This way the service can continue to learn and evolve and improve over the coming years.
Difficulties:	Enticing people to fill out the survey (could incentivize this through a raffle prize again)
Partners:	Underground Media & Design, Entire Exec Team, Spark Team Leaders, Spark Ambassadors
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Help hire the new Spark Exec with the incoming PTM
Why:	Completing hiring in March allows for less stress during the last month of the school year when exams are happening and it can be very hard to schedule interviews and then an initial exec meeting. It also means that applicants have time to write a cover letter and apply before they become overwhelmed by exam season, thereby increasing the number of applicants
Difficulties:	Scheduling interviews with classes, long weekends, etc.
Partners:	Incoming Spark PTM, Sarah Figueiredo (MSU VP Admin), another MSU PTM
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Plan an Executive Retreat
Why:	This past year, the Executive Team rented an AirBnB and had a weekend in a cute cabin to just hang-out. It was honestly such a fun time and was really nostalgic. While it does not have to be this exact same structure, I would love to replicate these feelings again with the new Exec team!
Difficulties:	Scheduling a weekend where everyone is free, finding a Retreat plan everyone enjoys
Partners:	Exec Team!
<b>Personal Goal</b>	Stay committed to my Year Plan. Reflect and be proud of the work I've done throughout the year (and entire undergraduate degree, yoinks!)

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## APRIL

<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Host a thoughtful and enjoyable Volunteer Appreciation social
Why:	After many hours of volunteering their time, Team Leaders deserve to feel appreciated and valued. By hosting a large gathering that TLs have the opportunity to mingle, recall memories of the year, and have some fun, we can demonstrate that we truly appreciate the team's efforts and that we wish them well in their future. This past year 1280 worked really well and Kahoot was fun!
Difficulties:	Finding a venue that can fit and feed 41 people, choosing a venue that allows for mingling and socialization, booking a venue when many other groups are also booking end-of-year socials, planning with Exec in advance so they have enough time to write all the individual cards to Team Leaders
Partners:	TwelveEighty, the Phoenix, Volunteer Coordinator (Pulkit Sahi), Exec Team, Underground Media & Design
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Ensure PTM is adequately transitioned (e.g. have transition report finished, meet with MSU Office staff and future partners they will need to work with, have multiple meetings to discuss the role)
Why:	It can be overwhelming to learn everything at once when being trained as a new PTM so spreading this out over a month or two can help decrease the load. It is also important to schedule meetings with partners and stakeholders so that they can take place before myself and the incoming PTM leave for the summer or have exams in April.
Difficulties:	Finding time to schedule these meetings during the exam period and during the meetings the new PTM will be having with their new executives
Partners:	MSU Office Staff, incoming PTM, MSU VP Admin (Sarah Figueiredo)
<b>Service Goal/Objective</b>	Re-evaluate Spark and propose any changes to schedules, budgets, roles etc. to SRA, MSU and incoming PTM
Why:	Evaluating the year is one of the most important things for the ongoing success of the service so as to best transition to a new team, and set them and the service up for future success
Difficulties:	Finishing the term it may be desirable to finish up work as quick as possible which can lend itself to neglecting important tasks like this. It is however vital to perform this evaluation
Partners:	MSU VP Admin (Sarah Figueiredo), MSU VP Finance (Alex Johnston), SRA, incoming PTM

<b>Personal Goal</b>	Accomplish all major goals of the Year Plan and reflect and learn from any goals that were not accomplished. Keep in touch with all the incredible people I have met through this service!
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### Long-term planning

*Below is an example of something that you could plan for longer than one year. This is quite a simple example, but you can choose to use this for simple tasks (such as increasing Facebook likes) or for broader visions (planning a multi-school conference for example)*

<b>Overarching Vision (what is the ultimate goal?)</b>	<i>Spark becomes a part of the transition experience for all first-year students, whether it be through small interactions with the service or committing to the weekly mentorship program</i>
<b>Description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are roughly 8000 first year students enrolled every year in McMaster. Each student transitions differently, however, I see Spark as a service that can provide flexible support via its mentorship program, events and online resources. I have heard so many of my friends say “I wish I had known about Spark in first year”, so I see Spark becoming a fundamental part of the university’s transition programs and offerings</li> </ul>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spark as a service will have better credibility for incoming students</li> <li>• Spark not only benefits first year students, but it also benefits its volunteers. Through my time volunteering with the service, I can honestly say I’ve gained exponential confidence in myself and learned things I would not have learned in any classroom. As Spark grows as a service to impact more first</li> </ul>

	<p>year students, the number of volunteers needed to support these students also grows, thus increasing the number of upper year students that are empowered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● By making new connections with groups and departments on-campus, Spark can gain more knowledge and provide better services to students. Additionally, these groups (such as the SSC, ISS, SAS etc.) will be aware of the resources Spark offers and can refer students to the service who they believe could benefit from it</li> </ul>
Year 1 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enhance student turnout at Spark programs (weekly mentorship program, workshops, Spark Formal, other Spark events)</li> <li>● Create a stronger foundation for the service and solidify its structure</li> <li>● Improve retention</li> <li>● Create a team that better represents the first-year student cohort</li> <li>● maintain volunteer interest and engagement throughout the year</li> <li>● Collect large amounts of quality feedback to shape the future of Spark programs and continue to improve their turnout</li> <li>● Collaborate with other campus groups to increase cohesion amongst different transition programs</li> <li>● Continue building Spark’s brand and credibility</li> </ul>
Year 2 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore other resources the service can offer</li> <li>● Implement feedback from last year to improve Spark programs and continue reaching more students.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Revise budget as necessary</li> <li>● Explore the possibility of a yearlong mentorship program, rather than Semester based. Still allow new students to join 2nd Semester, but many students have said they wished Spark sessions were yearlong</li> <li>● Hire more volunteers as necessary</li> <li>● Become a regular consultant during the creation of the Residence Life Curriculum</li> </ul>
Year 3 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to innovate and implement feedback</li> <li>● Further connections with the SSC, Residence Life, FYC, SAS, ISS etc.</li> <li>● Implement year long sessions, if logistically feasible</li> <li>● Continue to value volunteers</li> <li>● Provide more opportunities for first-years to learn and lead themselves, such as Spark Ambassadors</li> </ul>
Partners	MSU VP Admin (Sarah Figueiredo) MSU VP Finance (Alex Johnston) AVP Admin (Martino Saliccioli) Student Success Centre (Michele Corbeil and Tanya Kett) Residence Life (Sean Beaudette) Student Accessibility Services (Michelle Barr) International Student Services (Ana Pereira)

# Spark Coordinator

## Year Plan 2019/2020

What you want to do/accomplish:

1. Target the specific needs of various first-year student communities, including First Generation students, international students and students living off-campus
2. Improve retention and introduce students to the service, Team leaders and other first years in order to heighten interest
3. Maintain volunteer engagement throughout the year

### General Timeline

<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Train and introduce new exec team!</li> <li>● Send feedback to applicants</li> <li>● Discuss year plans and thoughts for service</li> <li>● One-on-ones</li> <li>● Get trained with outgoing PTM</li> <li>● Gain feedback from last year</li> <li>● Work on year plan</li> <li>● Exec retreat!</li> <li>● Phoenix tradition!</li> <li>● Establish group expectations, collective goals, and a vision for Spark as an executive team</li> </ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Receive PTM training</li> <li>● Fill out personal goals</li> <li>● Schedule weekly exec meetings</li> <li>● Schedule bi-weekly check-ins</li> <li>● Solidify important dates for the remainder of the year (e.g. Interviews, TL Training, Opening/Closing Ceremonies, etc.)</li> <li>● Set-up email accounts</li> <li>● Meet with Sean regarding Spark in Rez</li> <li>● Exec headshots</li> <li>● Begin brainstorming TL apps</li> <li>● Plan and help out at May@Mac</li> <li>● WWSTAPC proposal submission for Welcome Week planning</li> <li>● Work with O&amp;E on Welcome Week planning</li> <li>● Budget breakdown</li> <li>● Confirm interview weekend</li> <li>● Work with VC on booking interview rooms</li> </ul>
<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exec photoshoot and bios</li> <li>● Film first 5 videos for “Next on Spark” snealpeak videos for session groups</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Comms training</li> <li>● Promotion planning and implementation for TL apps</li> <li>● Shoot video for TL apps</li> <li>● Exec summer retreat!</li> <li>● Confirm training weekend with Exec, with peer Support services</li> <li>● Book rooms for training weekend</li> <li>● Meet with MUSC and Clubs on booking privileges for Sessions</li> <li>● Meet with ISS</li> <li>● Meet with SAS</li> <li>● Meet with SSC</li> <li>● Decide TL application questions and form</li> <li>● PROMO!</li> <li>● Release applications</li> <li>● Incorporate Spark in Planner and Rep training</li> <li>● Reach out to Planners for TL app promo</li> <li>● Brainstorm TL interview questions</li> <li>● Provide session feedback</li> <li>● Provide events feedback</li> <li>● Provide promo feedback</li> <li>● Continue planning WWSTAPC and Welcome Week logistics with O&amp;E</li> <li>● Write practice TL apps with VC</li> <li>● Make information about the role of a TL as accessible as possible through various promotional strategies</li> <li>● Practice marking apps</li> <li>● Horizons outreach confirmation</li> <li>● Work with promo and O&amp;E on Sponsorship Package</li> <li>● Host a live Q&amp;A on Facebook during the Sunday of interview week. The Exec team will host and answer specific questions from the Class of 2023</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Confirm venue for Spark Formal for events and book it (deposit)</li> <li>● Confirm interview questions and structure</li> <li>● MARK APPS!</li> <li>● Send out interview offers and organize into groups</li> <li>● Check in with Sean about Mini-sessions and Rez Curriculum</li> <li>● Coordinate with SSC on Welcome Week plans</li> <li>● Confirm Spark and rep training</li> <li>● Go over red flags and gold stars with Exec for interviews</li> <li>● INTERVIEW WEEKEND!</li> <li>● Send out TL offers and confirm team!!!!</li> <li>● Order TL t-shirts</li> <li>● Sponsorship check-in</li> </ul>

<p><b>August</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Host a second Insta/Facebook live Q&amp;A, targeted at starting classes and Welcome Week</li> <li>● Look at purchasing sessions materials (end of August)</li> <li>● Purchase Welcome Week materials</li> <li>● Purchase Night Before Classes materials and confirm with Horizons collab with events</li> <li>● Welcome Week presence</li> <li>● WWSTAPC events</li> <li>● Speak for Spark at Rep training</li> <li>● Incorporate Spark into Opening Ceremonies</li> <li>● Confirm sponsorships</li> <li>● Create an exciting and welcoming atmosphere for the newly hired Spark Team Leaders</li> <li>● Create a large interest in Spark during Welcome Week</li> <li>● Begin planning Spark TL Meet and Greet with VC</li> <li>● Begin prepping for TL training</li> <li>● Confirm photographer for training</li> <li>● Get videos and photos during Welcome Week - coordinate with Promo</li> <li>● Sessions feedback</li> <li>● Confirm promotional plan with promo and O&amp;E</li> <li>● Events feedback</li> <li>● Finalize video for Registration (early August)</li> <li>● Confirm plan for digital campaigns/resources with Wooder and Promo</li> <li>● Confirm RezLife plans</li> <li>● Confirm bookings for Sessions room with MUSC. Clubs, Mills etc.</li> <li>● Reach out to FYC</li> <li>● Hectic month for me! Wedding! Welcome Week! Spark! Prep for Classes! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Breath!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>September</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Team Meet and Greet!!!</li> <li>● Volunteer training and photos!!!</li> <li>● Film the last 5 “Next on Spark” videos for sessions during volunteer training</li> <li>● PROMO REGISTRATION!</li> <li>● Night Before Classes</li> <li>● Clubsfest!!!</li> <li>● Register at least 224 (14 per group x 16 groups) students in the first term Spark weekly mentorship program</li> <li>● TL Feedback nights</li> <li>● Make new TLs with fewer leadership experiences feel comfortable</li> </ul>

	<p>and valued in their role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TL social</li> <li>● Exec social</li> <li>● Get feedback from Execs</li> <li>● Work on FYC collab</li> <li>● First ReZLife mini-sessions</li> <li>● Pre-sessions event!!!</li> <li>● Schedule new Exec meeting time and book room</li> <li>● Schedule new biweekly check-in times</li> <li>● Purchase Sessions materials!</li> </ul>
<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduce Spark Ambassadors and open up survey</li> <li>● Spark event/workshop</li> <li>● TL 1:1s with VC</li> </ul>

<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Effectively promote Spark Formal (ideally sell out all tickets)</li> <li>● Work with Sean and FYC on Spark formal promo</li> <li>● Make a sessions training into a mini-social</li> <li>● Send out first-year student feedback survey</li> <li>● Exec feedback survey</li> <li>● Send out TL feedback survey</li> </ul>
<b>December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Take a break!!!</li> <li>● Give semester 2 sessions feedback</li> <li>● Give semester 2 events feedback</li> <li>● Confirm room bookings with VC for semester 2 (begin in November actually)</li> <li>● Confirm promo plan for semester 2 registration</li> <li>● Host a holiday social to show volunteer appreciation</li> <li>● Collect extensive TL and student feedback on Term 1 Sessions</li> <li>● Collect Mid-Year transition reports from executive members</li> <li>● Hire new Spark PTM</li> </ul>
<b>January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Register 200(+) students for second semester Spark</li> <li>● Run a successful and motivating Winter Re-Training for Team Leaders</li> <li>● FYC Collab and Spark Ambassadors event during registration</li> <li>● Pre-sessions event!</li> <li>● Sponsorship recap</li> <li>● Budget check-in</li> <li>● New online resource with Promo</li> <li>● PROMO for Registration!</li> <li>● Purchase term 2 sessions and events materials</li> </ul>

<b>February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Open up Spark Ambassadors again</li> <li>● Begin Term 2 1-on-1 check-ins</li> <li>● Use Sessions trainings as opportunities for volunteer appreciation</li> <li>● Finalize Semester 2 'Next Week on Spark' videos</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Get feedback from students</li> <li>● Get feedback from Exec</li> <li>● Get feedback from TLs</li> <li>● Begin incoming-PTM training</li> <li>● Help hire the new Spark Exec with the incoming PTM</li> <li>● Exec retreat!</li> <li>● TL appreciation awards</li> <li>● Write TL cars</li> </ul>
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Host a thoughtful and enjoyable Volunteer Appreciation social</li> <li>● Ensure PTM is adequately transitioned (e.g. have transition report finished, meet with MSU Office staff and future partners they will need to work with, have multiple meetings to discuss the role)</li> <li>● Ensure exec members have submitted their transition reports and have</li> <li>● Meet with the incoming execs by the end of the month</li> <li>● Host an end-of-year exec appreciation event.</li> </ul>