



REPORT

From the office of the...
Vice-President (Education)

TO: Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Shemar Hackett, Vice-President (Education)
SUBJECT: SRA 18F Report
DATE: January 3rd, 2020

Dear Members of the Assembly,

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a relaxing break, we're halfway through your term! Below is an update of my year plan goals and other projects that I've taken on between October 15th to now. As always, it's been a very busy but equally rewarding time. I have kept the report as brief as possible to save time and will be more than happy to answer any questions at the meeting if you have any. If you have any specific questions, please don't hesitate to reach out prior to!

PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN

Improving Federal Advocacy

Through UCRU, we have been looking to find ways to strengthen the organization. Right now, UCRU is a small organization that is trying to develop internally while simultaneously building credibility externally. Given our yearly turnover and lack of permanent staff, this has been an issue year after year. Currently I'm working on a few bylaws that can be put in place to govern the organization (consultation framework for policies and the addition/removal of members). At the last meeting, we discussed opening the door to schools that aren't research intensive and will have a larger conversation on this piece this term. It has been time consuming trying to organize meeting and accomplish tasks given the disorganization and number of people involved. Hopefully UCRU can get up and running in time for our Federal advocacy week and discuss what the future of this organization looks like in February.

Sexual Violence Support

I am currently one of the authors for the Sexual violence Prevention and Response policy paper that OUSA will be writing for the Spring 2020 General Assembly. I have been conducting research online to aid in the process and would be more than happy to sit down and talk to any student who would like to be a part of this process. The AVP: Provincial and Federal Affairs, Angel, is also an author on this paper and can speak to any student as well. I have also attended the EIO's SVPR reviewal sessions last term. They had a number of outreach sessions to get feedback for the provincial mandate for university's to update their SVPR policy. Based on our own internal policy and our advocacy priorities, I attended the session with our Operations Coordinator to provide feedback and discuss ways in which our policies can improve.

Student Wellness Review

The wellness review or the Health Services Survey has officially closed! We have had roughly 250 students fill out the survey – though we would've liked more, there is a lot of very useful information that can be used to influence our advocacy efforts. The University Affairs committee will be working on compiling the information and writing a report of all the data in second semester. All goes well, the report should be available online by the end of the term.

Off-Campus Safety and Accessibility

Accessibility was a priority within our municipal budget submission. When meeting with city councilors, they all haven't been entirely too receptive to the idea of snow removal within the city and it doesn't seem like the project will be moving forward anytime soon. This will be an ongoing priority and will be mentioned during the February delegation for City Council.

In regards to off-campus safety, Ryan recently did a walk through of Ward 1 with our City Councilor to review areas that need improved lighting. He can speak more to this when he reports.

Landlord Accountability

Getting more accountability for landlords has been an ongoing priority for. A number of years. We have recently been pushing for the Landlord Licensing Bylaw for the city of Hamilton, but have been experiencing a number of issues. It seems as though the date in which the bylaw will be presented to council keeps getting pushed farther and farther back. As of right now, it seems as though the licensing will be brought forward in May. I will be keeping an eye out on this issue and will prep my successor on delegating to council for the first few days of May.

Another project is the landlord rating system, a website I launched last year providing students an avenue to rate their student house/landlords. Unfortunately, the website used last year is now being shut down. They are shifting towards new priorities and will no longer be updating the Yomes website. This has reopened conversations with the university to figure out ways in which a rating system can be integrated into the work they already do. I have had a few meetings to discuss an internal mechanism for the rating system and we hope to have a pilot operational prior to the start of the next school year!

Board Projects

First semester the Board did bi-weekly office hours. Though they are a great outreach tool, we plan to remodel them for second semester in an attempt to increase engagement and turnouts. I also have been looking at a few bylaws and policies that I plan to bring to the SRA for approval. One of which will be coming to this meeting, and there is a separate memo for that. Let me know if there are any questions.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

OUSA General Assembly & Advocacy Meetings

I have written a separate report in December on what happened during OUSA General Assembly. It was a long and tiring weekend, but the experience of developing policy was useful for the delegates who attended. As a reminder, applications for Spring General Assembly are now open! Please go apply and tell your constituents to apply to the position as well. The papers this semester are International Students, Sexual Violence

Prevention and Response, and Rural and Northern Students. If you have any questions about the application process or about GA, please let me know!

Spring Valedictorian

Spring Valedictorian...the most fun project ever!!! I have been organizing valedictorian applications/committees as they will be opening in a few days. This has been a frustrating process as it relies on a significant number of individuals in order to get it done. Thankfully, most of the heavy lifting is finished with applications now available on the MSU website or in person in MUSC 201.

A reminder to the following SRA members that you will be sitting on the adjudication committees to select a valedictorian:

Social Sciences – Salsa Sarhan
Humanities/Arts and Science – Catherine Hu and Damanjot Kaur
Health Sciences – Arzoo Alam
Nursing – Sarah Homsy
Science – Ashley Reddy
Engineering – Eric Sinnige
Business – Thomas Hankins

You will receive an email from the dean of the faculty when it's time to select a candidate.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

OUSA Campaign

OUSA runs two educational campaigns every year. If you recall, our first semester campaign was on OSAP. There have been conversations of running a secondary OSAP campaign to ensure the conversation is continued, but it has been difficult to determine what the campaign/event should look like. I have proposed a few different ideas, but would be happy to chat with any of you to discuss what you would like to see out of a second OSAP campaign OR another educational initiative that OUSA should run!

Active Learning Panel

Fawziyah and I have been working with Erin from the McPherson Institute on organizing a panel on active learning within classrooms. During my election, I talked about wanting lecture breaks in all courses. This project is quite difficult to achieve and there hasn't been much appetite thus far. Given the time constraints of a one-year term, the approach to this point has shifted. The focus now, instead of just a break, is looking at how we can make courses more engaging/interacting to keep students' attention. We are pulling together professors, TA's and students to have a facilitated conversation on ways students want to learn and how professors can be of more support. All are welcome and we are hoping to see a heavy presence from instructors. The event will be held in February and I hope to see you all there!

Federal Lobby Week

The first week of February Josh and I will be in Ottawa for our federal lobby week. The briefs are currently being written; the priorities federally will be indigenous student support, financial aid, undergraduate student research and International student support.

We have been spending the past few weeks organizing the trip and figuring out the best week to go/what the priorities will be. I will keep you all updated on how the week went when we get back!

SUCCESESSES

MSU Mailing List

One of the projects that came up during the summer was an MSU mailing list. I thought it would be an interesting project to bring back and see if there was an interest to have regularly scheduled updates on what is happening within the union. After several months of conversation with the university, we are finally moving forward and releasing the first mailing list this month! All MSU members will receive a few key updates about Board projects, hiring and upcoming events. If any of you have any feedback on layout, time the email was sent or anything else please let me know so improvements can be made in the future.

This is a snapshot of the past few months! If there is anything else that you would like to inquire about, please let me know!

Best,

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