FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Redsuit investigation makes prudent recommendations, but change must be student driven

HAMILTON - After weeks of inquiry, there is clear evidence of deficiencies within the past leadership of the McMaster Engineering Society (MES). As a result of the investigation, the Dean of Students has made numerous recommendations and suggested corrective actions to the University, all of which will be implemented according to Provost Wilkinson. The McMaster Students Union (MSU) supports the adoption of each of these recommendations, particularly in regards to the adherence of existing health and safety policies, increasing financial transparency and providing more support, training and development to student leaders.

However, students are concerned about ambiguous language in some of the recommendations that may suggest a forthcoming encroachment on the autonomy of student leadership across campus, particularly in regards to Welcome Week. It must be noted that the investigation did not supply any evidence that similar shortcomings are present within any other student leadership structure on campus. Moving forward, the MSU, working in conjunction with the MES, as well as all faculty society leadership, must be involved with the defining of any new orientation and/or leadership training for student leaders.

“The MSU is excited to be a part of the positive change that will come from a negative situation,” said MSU President Teddy Saull. “We are an organization that is ideally situated to define the leadership orientation and training programs alluded to in the recommendations. Student leadership, more specifically, autonomous student leadership is the cornerstone of student life. The MSU will work with all faculty societies to ensure responsible student government continues to thrive for the benefit of the undergraduate students of McMaster University.”

The MSU can be seen as a model for many of the changes that need to happen at the institutional level. For example, working with the Office of Human Rights and Equity Services, the MSU instituted mandatory anti-oppression training for all of its student service managers and elected representatives. In addition, having already recognized the need to better support faculty society leaders, the MSU created and hired a newly developed Faculties Societies Coordinator position. The MSU will continue to support faculty societies and the University in enhancing the student experience, as well as developing best practices for student leadership, governance and financial transparency.

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