



AGENDA - SRA 170
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY
Sunday, February 25, 2017 at 5:00pm
Council Chambers, GH111

PROCEDURE

Call of the Roll, Playing of National Anthem, Territory Recognition, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of SRA Minutes, Announcements from the Chair, Special Orders of the Day, Delegation from the Floor, Report Period, Information Period, Question Period, Business Arising from the Minutes, Business, Committee Business, Unfinished Business, New Business, Time of Next Meeting, Call of the Roll, Adjournment

The SRA would like to recognize today that we are situated on traditional Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe territories through the 'Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty'.

DELEGATION FROM THE FLOOR

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Peer Support Line | Anbalagan |
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REPORTS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Arts and Science | Yun |
| 2. Business | McNally |
| 3. Engineering | Stott |
| 4. Internal Governance | Kamini Persaud |
| 5. Services | Kristina Epifano |
| 6. Executive Board | Ahmed |
| 7. Vice-President (Administration) | Anbalagan |

BUSINESS

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Approval of SRA Member Job Description | Anbalagan |
| 2. Approval of Board of Directors Job Descriptions | Anbalagan |
| 3. Ratification of 2017-2018 Electoral Appeal Board Members | Ibe |
| 4. Rescind OPERATING POLICY – PEER SUPPORT LINE | Anbalagan |

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- | | |
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| 1. OPERATING POLICY – INTERFAITH COUNCIL | Kamini Persaud |
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MOTIONS

1. **Moved** by ____, **seconded** by ____ that the Assembly approve the Student Representative Assembly Member job description, as circulated.
2. **Moved** by ____, **seconded** by ____ that the Assembly approve the following job descriptions, as circulated:
 - President and Chief Executive Officer
 - Vice-President (Administration) and Chief Administrative Officer
 - Vice-President (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer
 - Vice-President (Education) and Corporate Officer
3. **Moved** by ____, **seconded** by ____ that the Assembly approve the following members of the Electoral Appeal Board: Professor Nibaldo Galleguillos, with Saad Syed and Kritika Seth as the two alternates.
4. **Moved** by ____, **seconded** by ____ that the Assembly rescind OPERATING POLICY – PEER SUPPORT LINE.
5. **Moved** by ____, that the Assembly approve OPERATING POLICY – INTERFAITH COUNCIL, as circulated.



Student Representative Assembly Meeting 170
Sunday, February 25, 2018 at 5:00pm
Council Chambers, GH111

Called to Order at 5:02pm

CALL OF THE ROLL

Present: Anas, Anbalagan, Aoki, Arbess, Arnold, Deshpande, D'Souza, Florean, Gardner, Hackett, Ibe, Lao, Lee, McNally, Nwamadi, Obaidullah, Ochocinski, Raez-Villaneuva, Sabra Salim, Sabrin Salim, Senthillmohan, Shin, Sooriyakumaran, Stott, Webb, Zhang

Absent Excused:

Absent Ahmed, Chestney, Fama, McGill, Patel, Szeliga, Vlatkovic

Late Risi, Yun

Others Present: Brandon Malamis (Observer), Pranali Raval (PSL Assistant Director), Victoria Wong (Observer), Jasmine Bhatti (MSU Member), Anna Goshua (Observer), Aamna Abdullah (Observer), Divya Jain (Observer), Karina Nabieva (Observer), Kamini Persaud (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (incoming QSCC Coordinator), Zach Rudge (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (MSU Member), Haley Greene (MSU Member), Zienab Khawaja (Observer), Geneva Neal (Observer), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)

Chair Helen Zeng

TERRITORY RECOGNITION

- The SRA would like to recognize today that we are situated on traditional Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe territories through the 'Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty'.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Ibe, **seconded** by Deshpande that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as presented.

Amendment

Moved by Florean, **seconded** by Stott to amend the agenda and add 'Delegation from PSL' to Delegation from the Floor.

- Florean stated that the service would like to share their thoughts on the upcoming motion.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Amendment

Moved by Sabra Salim, **seconded** by Deshpande to amend the agenda and add 'Letter from Previous PSL Volunteer' to Delegation from the Floor.

- Sabra Salim stated that she received the letter from a previous volunteer, and that they would like for this to be read out to everyone.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Vote to Adopt Agenda

Moved by Ibe, **seconded** by Deshpande that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as amended.

Passes Unanimously

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

- The Chair went over how the meeting would work for the observers in the back. The Chair asked that everyone please sign the Observer's List.

DELEGATION FROM THE FLOOR

Set Parameters

Moved by Ibe, **seconded** by Stott to set parameters for the Delegation from the Floor #1 to be 30 minutes for presentation, and 15 minutes for questions.

Passes Unanimously

1. Peer Support Line – Preethi Anbalagan and Kristina Epifano presented (presentation attached)

- Anbalagan and Epifano over the presentation with the Assembly.

Questions

- Florean asked where students would go if they didn't identify with any existing peer supports. Anbalagan responded that they would receive generalized peer support with SHEC. She explained that the TRRA put together training so that all services know what to do.
- Pranali Raval ceded to Brandon Malamis. Malamis asked what was being done to support those in the other services that currently exist. Anbalagan responded that currently the challenge with PSL is that volunteers work late hours, and their communication is only through telephone or chat. She stated that the only support those volunteers can get are one on ones with the Director or Assistant Director. Anbalagan explained that with the other peer support services there are already policies in place and experiences within the community.
- Sabra Salim stated that with PSL people were actively choosing peer support over professional. She asked if there wouldn't be a distribution of the problem if rescinded. Anbalagan responded that in the beginning the peer support was taking 15-20 minutes at a time, and then would refer to other services but now volunteers are spending hours on the phone and it has become inappropriate. She explained that they will see increases in usage but there are full-time staff who can help support.
- Raval ceded to Victoria Wong. Wong asked about transitioning in the summer, and how would they get the volunteers to come to this. Anbalagan responded that one of the recommendations was about how to best support the callers, and gradually transition them into using other services. She added that the working group will explore these issues.
- Stott asked what were the benefits of Good2Talk and McMaster having a strong relationship. Anbalagan responded that there were profound benefits. She stated that they have an events team, and are fully funded by the provincial government, and run free promotion events on campus that engages with students.
- Sutina Chou stated that some of the reasons discussed for rescinding the policy was based on the unfair burden put on the volunteer. Chou asked how would this be different than any other peer support service, as they're still faced with stresses. Anbalagan responded that there was exclusivity and uniqueness with PSL as they are an after-hours service that is anonymous. She explained that when someone walks into SHEC they find a community. Anbalagan felt that some of the burden experienced by the PSL volunteers would be more profound than other services. Epifano added that the anonymity comes into play. She explained that when a SHEC volunteer requires support they would go to their

Coordinator but are also able to discuss their challenges and reach out for support elsewhere, but PSL volunteers aren't to disclose themselves and it makes it more difficult to go to a friend and discuss it.

- Senthilmohan asked how the student ambassador program worked with Good2Talk. Anbalagan responded that it was to support and promote the helpline.
- Raval ceded to Geneva Neal. Neal stated that there seemed to be a lot of concern for people using the PSL. They asked if this was a concern brought up from volunteers themselves or hypothetical. Epifano responded that this came through the services review, and through consultation with the PTM. She explained that Director did identify the challenges, and then went to try and solve the challenges. Epifano added that there was also an internal survey done online. She explained that she would never assume information and this was all data from the service.

Set Parameters

Moved by Sabra Salim, **seconded** by Sabrin Salim to set parameters for Delegation from the Floor #2 to be 25 minutes for presentation, and 15 minutes for questions.

Passes Unanimously

2. Delegation from Peer Support Line – Pranali Raval, Victoria Wong, Brandon Malamis, Zeinab Khawaja (memo circulated and attached)

CW: discussions of suicide, and suicide ideation

- The group went over the memo that was circulated to the Assembly earlier.

Questions

- Sabrin Salim thanked everyone for coming out. She stated that she has never done ASIST training, and asked if it was enough. Khawaja responded that ASIST was very helpful getting an idea of what to do. They stated that the volunteers do scenarios in training, and there are model conversations had for them to get comfortable on the line.
- Sutina Chou asked based on their professional opinion were the issues unique to the service or symptomatic of a greater problem. Khawaja responded that it was symptomatic. They stated that the other peer supports are in person, and those services are getting the same types of conversations. Khawaja asked how could it not be stressful or a burden, but stated that the MSU wouldn't cut WGEN as it was taking a resource from a student. Khawaja reaffirmed that this was not unique to the service.
- Deshpande thanked everyone for presenting. He stated that one of the things that was mentioned, that they were all in agreement with is that PSL was not a crisis line. He asked what was the need for ASIST training which is used for suicide intervention training. Deshpande asked why was it going in that direction if it was not supposed to be a crisis line. Malamis responded that they train listeners to respond calmly in all situations, and that this was in case something happens. They stated that the ASIST training was to make sure they are as prepared as possible for their own well-being. Khawaja added that crisis lines were exclusively for suicide but they wanted the listeners to be prepared in case. They stated that they had a friend from SWHAT call the line because someone was saying they were going to kill themselves and the friend didn't know what to do.
- Arbess thanked the presenters for showing determination and commitment for the cause. He explained that all of the Assembly and the entire union could learn from this. Arbess asked for them to outline the training that goes into preparing PSL volunteers, and if they thought it was enough to deal with high risk issues such as suicide or secondary trauma. Raval responded that they prepare slides of content on how to generally provide peer support, and which skills to use. They added that there are sessions and scenarios with mock chats and calls. Raval stated that after that the volunteers then receive the two-day intervention training with ASIST.
- Ibe thanked them for their time and for coming. He explained that the reason for this conversation was the concern for students, and looking for the best way to support. Ibe stated that for the last couple of days volunteers, present and past, have reached out and given different opinions. He explained that the

majority agree that they were under pressure and wanted PSL to be rescinded. Ibe asked how do they account for those testimonials. Raval stated that was a concern to have. Raval added that they weren't a part of this decision and that they didn't know it would be rescinded until this past Wednesday. Raval explained that it was upsetting that some of the volunteers feel the way they do.

- Epifano asked for them to explain how they requested for a training executive, and how would this position be any different than the current TRRA. Khawaja responded that the position would have experience as a listener, and be known to the volunteers so that they could be comfortable disclosing items. They stated that the PSL asked for this year and it didn't happen, but if it had there would have been additional training. Khawaja felt that a training exec would help facilitate better training.

Moved by Ibe, **seconded** by Aoki to exhaust the Speaker's List.

Passes Unanimously

- Florean ceded to Ibe. Ibe stated that the PSL exec would like a crisis protocol. He explained that they have been advised that they move against crisis protocol. Wong stated that they should have had this dialogue before rescinding the operating policy, as they felt that having a crisis protocol would be crucial for dealing with everything PSL does. Khawaja stated that every service should have a crisis protocol and that taking away the helpline won't help the problem.

Moved by Sabrin Salim, **seconded** by Sabra Salim that the Assembly recess for 10 minutes.

- Sabrin Salim stated that the next delegation was a long letter, and everyone should have a break.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Recessed at 6:46pm

Called to Order at 6:57pm

CALL OF THE ROLL

Present: Anbalagan, Arbess, Arnold, Deshpande, Florean, Gardner, Hackett, Ibe, McNally, Nwamadi, Obaidullah, Raez-Villaneuva, Sabra Salim, Sabrin Salim, Senthillmohan, Shin, Stott, Webb

Absent Excused:

Absent Ahmed, Chestney, Fama, McGill, Patel, Szeliga, Vlatkovic

Late Anas, Aoki, D'Souza, Lao, Lee, Ochocinski, Sooriyakumaran, Zhang

Others Present: Brandon Malamis (Observer), Pranali Raval (PSL Assistant Director), Victoria Wong (Observer), Jasmine Bhatti (MSU Member), Anna Goshua (Observer), Aamna Abdullah (Observer), Divya Jain (Observer), Karina Nabieva (Observer), Kamini Persaud (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (incoming QSCC Coordinator), Zach Rudge (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (MSU Member), Haley Greene (MSU Member), Zienab Khawaja (Observer), Geneva Neal (Observer), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)

Chair Helen Zeng

Set Parameters

Moved by Sabrin Salim, **seconded** by Stott to set parameters for Delegation from the Floor #3 to be 25 minutes for presentation.

- Sabrin Salim stated that it was a statement letter, and there was no need for questions.

Vote to Set Parameters

Passes Unanimously

3. Letter from MSU Member – Sabra Salim presented (letter attached)

- Sabra Salim read the letter.

Moved by Deshpande, **seconded** by D’Souza to extend by 10 minutes.

Passes Unanimously

REPORT PERIOD

1. Arts and Science Caucus – Yun presented

- Yun summarized the report.

2. Business Caucus – McNally presented

- McNally summarized the report.

3. Engineering Caucus – Stott presented

- Stott summarized the report.

4. Internal Governance Committee – Kamini Persaud presented

- Persaud summarized the report.

5. Services Committee – Kristina Epifano presented

- Epifano summarized the report.

Questions

- Ibe commended Epifano on her work for the Services Review. He asked what has she learned from the process on what to improve. Epifano responded that there were things she was definitely learning, such as having the PTM being more a part of the entirety of the review. She explained that she has met with the PTM many times throughout the review, but they are now included in the committee meetings and there is more engagement with the PTM from the Service Committee.

6. Executive Board – report attached

7. Vice-President (Administration) – Anbalagan presented

- Anbalagan summarized the report.

INFORMATION PERIOD

- Sabrin Salim reported that they have launched the McMaster Peoples Project on Facebook, and there will be an event on Tuesday night.
- Lee announced that SRA nominations close this Tuesday.
- Deshpande asked for all the members to sign up for PolicyCon, if they haven’t already done so.

- Ibe reported that on Friday he attended the Hamilton Post Secondary Advisory Group (HPSAG), and that the Mayor of Hamilton was there as well as the MP and MPP. He stated that he spoke about transit and raised concerns from presidential platforms. Ibe reported that the SLEF process is on-going, and that some may have noticed the giant screen in MUSC and that was a result of SLEF funding from a previous year.
- Anbalagan reported that Diversity Services and SHEC PTM positions were closing tonight.
- Bertolo announced that Delegation Day was Tuesday at 3pm at City Hall.
- Sabrin Salim announced that CLAY was hiring a media design coordinator and that applications were due tonight.
- Webb announced that Campus Events applications close tonight as well.

QUESTION PERIOD

- Ibe asked what the experiences were for the student advisory committees so far. Webb responded that it was great to see what was going on with SSC more in depth, and was appreciate of what the MSU is doing more than before. Obaidullah responded that she was on the committee for SWC and it was going well. She explained that there was a disconnect between operations and students so being on the committee helped. She added that the only recommendation going forward would be for an agenda to be circulated ahead of time.
- Lee asked the President if anything came out of the HPSAG meeting. Ibe responded that the Mayor of Hamilton was having a meeting with Metrolinx that afternoon, and said that they would bring up concerns. Ibe stated that he will follow up to see what the resolution was and will report back to the Assembly.

BUSINESS

1. Approval of SRA Member Job Description

Moved by Webb, **seconded** by Lee that the Assembly approve the Student Representative Assembly Member job description, as circulated.

In Favour: 26 Opposed: 1 Abstentions: 0
Opposed: Shin
Motion Passes

2. Approval of Board of Directors Job Descriptions

Moved by Deshpande, **seconded** by Sabrin Salim that the Assembly approve the following job descriptions, as circulated:

- President and Chief Executive Officer
 - Vice-President (Administration) and Chief Administrative Officer
 - Vice-President (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer
 - Vice-President (Education) and Corporate Officer
-
- Deshpande stated that the majority of the job descriptions haven't been updated since 2004.
 - Webb stated that there were some grammatical inconsistencies throughout, specifically the President's.
 - Deshpande stated that they tried to change everything to be gender neutral, but they could amend to have it pass with the caveat of the changes.
 - Anbalagan asked if it could be done through administration.
 - Scott responded that it could be done.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

3. Ratification of 2017-2018 Electoral Appeal Board Members

Moved by Sabrin Salim, **seconded** by Lee that the Assembly ratify the following members of the Electoral Appeal Board: Professor Nivaldo Galleguillos, with Saad Syed and Kritika Seth as the two alternates.

Passes Unanimously

Moved by Lee, **seconded** by Anbalagan that the Assembly recess for 15 minutes.

- Lee stated that the next item will be a long discussion, so they should take a quick break.

Vote on Motion

In Favour: 26 Opposed: 1 Abstentions: 1
Opposed: Raez-Villaneuva
Abstained: Yun
Motion Passes

Recessed at 7:56pm

Called to Order at 8:11pm

CALL OF THE ROLL

Present: Anbalagan, Arbess, Arnold, Deshpande, Florean, Gardner, Hackett, Lao, Lee McNally, Nwamadi, Obaidullah, Ochocinski, Raez-Villaneuva, Sabra Salim, Sabrin Salim, Shin, Webb

Absent Excused:

Absent Ahmed, Chestney, Fama, McGill, Patel, Szeliga, Vlatkovic

Late Anas, Aoki, D'Souza, Ibe, Senthilmohan, Sooriyakumaran, Stott, Zhang

Others Present: Brandon Malamis (Observer), Pranali Raval (PSL Assistant Director), Victoria Wong (Observer), Jasmine Bhatti (MSU Member), Anna Goshua (Observer), Aamna Abdullah (Observer), Divya Jain (Observer), Karina Nabieva (Observer), Kamini Persaud (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (incoming QSCC Coordinator), Zach Rudge (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (MSU Member), Haley Greene (MSU Member), Zienab Khawaja (Observer), Geneva Neal (Observer), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)

Chair Helen Zeng

4. Rescind OPERATING POLICY – PEER SUPPORT LINE

Moved by Anbalagan, **seconded** by Anas that the Assembly rescind OPERATING POLICY – PEER SUPPORT LINE.

CW: discussions of suicide, and suicide ideation

- Anbalagan thanked those who dedicated their time to this, and stated that conversations like this aren't easy. She hoped that everyone makes an informed decision.
- Anas added that this will be an ongoing discussion, and won't be ending today in this room.
- Sabrin Salim asked what the steps would be if the operating policy was rescinded. She asked what would happen if the SRA kept it. Sabrin Salim ceded the rest of her time to Anbalagan.
- Anbalagan responded that it would go back to the Executive Board to look into it again. She explained that the presentation and conversations show why option A might not be the most viable. Anbalagan

stated that if the policy was rescinded then they would be looking at communication and include all people involved. She added that a working group will be developed for peer support promotions.

- Lee ceded to Zeinab Khawaja. Khawaja stated that PSL was not bringing in people for crisis, and that it doesn't receive an influx of calls every day or week. They stated that the SRA's plan seemed to be moving everything to other peer supports but the issues would be the same, and that a crisis protocol wasn't being addressed. Khawaja asked if those other services would be cut too. They stated that everyone expresses suicide and crisis uniquely and that PSL can't be the perfect resource for everyone but there are many. Khawaja explained that the services was only in it's fifth year, and that there hasn't been enough time or support to grow, and that there was still room for improvement. They stated that this was too short of notice to develop any arguments, and it was inconvenient that this arose over Reading Week. Khawaja added that they felt that the PSL perspective wasn't considered, and that the survey released didn't have a section where volunteers could share their views.
- Epifano stated that a lot of assumptions were being made that she and the Committee didn't do their jobs, and didn't anyone a platform to speak on. She explained that they have been researching options for four months, and that they did give volunteers an opportunity to add information at the end of the survey. She added that it was the same for students. Epifano stated that she did everything in her power to make sure that they had more than enough information to go on to make the recommendations, and that the Committee did their due diligence and that she backs the data 100%.
- Lee stated that he will be speaking as a representative from Health Sciences. He explained that he voted for the motion in Executive Board, and supported it coming forward to the SRA. Lee stated that he received a lot of emails from his constituents, and Lao released a survey to get more input. He reported that in the survey there were 72 responses with 92% stating that they wanted to keep PSL. Lee urged everyone to think of their constituents. Lee ceded the rest of his time to Lao.
- Lao went over the results of the Health Sciences survey.
- Anbalagan stated that she understood that they were put in a position that wasn't easy, and how do they respond to their constituents. She explained that the constituents are loudest in this room and online, but that there are many who weren't sharing their opinions because of public scrutiny. She asked the Assembly to imagine the amount of scrutiny someone else could receive from opening themselves up and that the vulnerable community might not be coming forward but it doesn't mean that they weren't constituents as well.
- Sabra Salim stated that she was torn with this decision. She felt that Anbalagan and Lee touched on the points, and that the evidence was compelling. She stated that it was safe to acknowledge that they could be putting volunteers and callers in danger. Salim added that from email responses and messages to SRA Science there were countless requests to not cut the service. Salim explained that there were negative connotations of the word 'cutting' a peer support service. Salim stated that whether the Assembly chooses to rescind the operating policy or not, there needs to be more conversations about a crisis protocol. She stated that they could vote this down and look into different options, but in that time, they are putting other people at risk. Salim added that she couldn't say which way she was voting but hoped that everyone knew that peer support was important, and if they do end up rescinding the policy they are not sacrificing it.
- Pranali Raval ceded their time to Victoria Wong. Wong stated that not everyone uses PSL but that doesn't mean it wasn't useful. They stated that the Assembly can't generalize and think that finding other support that students can be okay with. Wong stated that support looks different for everyone.
- D'Souza thanked everyone who came to the meeting today. He stated that no doubt in his mind that volunteer listeners, past and present, are kind, passionate, and helpful. D'Souza wanted to point out that a large portion of the volunteers said that the training helped. He revealed that he was a peer support listener before ASIST training was implemented. D'Souza wanted to share the reality of what it was like to be a volunteer, and that when they got to shift they wondered whether there would be a call, and what would they do once they received it. He added that he had hoped that he could relate to the student and also hope it wasn't a crisis call. He explained that there was a crisis protocol in place if a caller was at risk, and that it was posted on the wall, but when that phone rings the heart pumps and the volunteer who was freaking out less was the one to answer. D'Souza stated when hearing stories, people don't think specifically to training and someone who wasn't professionally trained might be putting a life at risk.

D'Souza stated that when he thought of PSL he thought of two things, that he was happy the MSU has this but what if a student who was in crisis seriously needed support and may take risk to themselves or others. He asked the Assembly if call PSL would help those students, and he said his mind tells him no, amongst interactions with others. D'Souza felt that students could get the help and support they need, but not through PSL, and that the SAP and Good2Talk have trained professionals.

- Florean thanked the PSL executive who came out to speak. She wanted to point out that she met up with the AVP Services about why this was brought forward, and one of the things that was said stuck. PSL is an amazing service and they can see it by how many are showing up, but if something does become a crisis it is not a student's responsibility to handle this. She added that while it hasn't happened, it can, and that's where she was hesitant about this. Florean asked Epifano how many people reached out about suicide in September, and the number was four. Florean stated that it wasn't that much but Epifano had pointed out to her that it only took one person and that just because they have a system in place doesn't mean the students on the link should be taking responsibility. Florean explained that she was a lifeguard, and had years of training but that every time she looked at the pool she was terrified because she had to be on 100% of the time. She explained that they have to take care of student volunteers and provide a good service.
- Sabrin Salim explained that she was torn as there were arguments on both sides of the table. Salim stated that she wanted to tell a story that is relatable. She explained that recently she and her sister took their G2 driving test, and unfortunately, her sister did not pass. Salim stated that the instructor told her that she was an excellent driver but made a mistake, and that while there were a number of things that she did, it only took one wrong move. Salim explained that that was the concern with PSL, and while it was a great line, and that people were going for support, it takes a single situation for it to go bad. Salim explained that she didn't want to take it away but logically the evidence was saying otherwise. She asked if it would be possible to give a pilot year where they heavily promoted Good2Talk. Salim ceded the rest of her time to Anbalagan.
- Anbalagan stated that the pilot idea was interesting, but that it only takes one mistake and if they give it another year and if there was a crisis call that went wrong, how do they answer to that.
- Obaidullah ceded her time to Steffi Arkilander. Arkilander stated that they know from talking to their friends that using other services like the SWC takes a long time, and if something doesn't work out with the counsellors what then. They explained that they have friends who reach out to PSL because the student couldn't talk to a counsellor. Arkilander stated that if they do option B they would have to look at promoting Good2Talk better, and would like to see how promoting that would benefit mental health.
- Shin stated that it was important to bring up the fact that this was happening over Reading Week, and that there wasn't much access to information. She explained that she didn't think that this was representative of students.
- Anbalagan ceded to Miranda Clayton. Clayton stated that PSL started at the end of her second year as a pilot, and operated two days a week. She explained that this was life before peer support services, and there was no where to go. Clayton stated that everyone was so lucky to have this rich amount of resources on and off campus, and that she wished she had Good2Talk in her first year. She explained that she would like to see this possibly have an option of staying open and revisiting it in a year.
- Raval ceded their time to Zeinab Khawaja. Khawaja stated that she was tired of hearing of students being liabilities and not having the mental capacity to make decisions. They explained that this matters to a lot of people, and that student volunteers work on crisis lines throughout Ontario. Khawaja stated that they don't see why the MSU can't have it without proper training and protocol. They explained that it was important to not make generalizations and give the volunteers more training and practise, and that not all volunteers feel intense panic when the phone rings. Khawaja stated that this was the nature of the work though. They asked what happens if the person who may be in crisis didn't want to talk to a professional because of past experiences.
- Sabra Salim stated that she thought that they were valid statements, but that they would all agree that peer support was important, and that the MSU wasn't removing it just choosing a different avenue to be more safe and better equipped. She explained that calls that become crisis calls could be directed to crisis management, but they don't know where it ends up because of confidentiality and because of that they don't know if the student did hurt themselves.

- Deshpande stated that when making their decision to please keep in mind that the MSU has a services committee and they put in a lot of time and research into this. He stated that members saying the decision was rushed was false, as this was a four-month long process. Deshpande reminded everyone that the standing committee do the background work and helps make the final decision, and that they should be trusting the research that has gone into this.
- Arnold stated that she wanted to speak of her only experience of calling into PSL. She explained that it wasn't her in crisis, but a friend. Arnold stated that she was only in first year, but didn't know who to call so she called a friend who recommended PSL. She explained that it was mistake because it wasn't a crisis line, but it was heavily advertised during Welcome Week and some have mistaken it as such. Arnold stated that thankfully nothing happened but a lot of time was wasted by not being referred to someone else who would help her or her friend. She added that the situation ended with her feeling that no one could support her and didn't know of any other hotline.
- Webb asked the Vice-President (Administration) about the idea of a probation year, and was wondering if this was an option. Webb ceded the rest of her time to Anbalagan.
- Anbalagan responded that in her position she has access to knowledge that she cannot contractually reveal. She explained that previous coordinators were in the same position. Anbalagan stated that due to this information that if there is even one more year the MSU is running the risk of one person calling PSL who is in crisis, and it wasn't about the MSU's liability. It was more about the liability of the life being in a student's hands.

Moved by Arbess, **seconded** by Stott to Call to Question

Vote to Call to Question

In Favour: 7 Opposed: 19 Abstentions: 0

Opposed: Ibe, Anbalagan, Deshpande, D'Souza, Shin, Gardner, Sabra Salim, Sabrin Salim, Obaidullah, Anas, Senthillmohan, Yun, Nwamadi, Lao, Lee, Ochocinski, Florean, Webb, Hackett

Motion Fails

Back to Main Motion

Moved by Anbalagan, **seconded** by Anas that the Assembly rescind OPERATING POLICY – PEER SUPPORT LINE.

- Bertolo stated that she was speaking on behalf of friends, and a concerned MSU member. She stated that they all have friends they're worried about and no one knows if they will every get a phone call. Bertolo explained that while she hasn't used PSL, she has spoke to someone who has and they were in favour of rescinding the policy. Bertolo stated that the student didn't think it was fair to put something like this on student volunteers, and that they tried to help a friend who was in a crisis situation but what if they had someone who couldn't handle the situation. Bertolo added that this friend when speaking to PSL numerous numbers could predict what they would end up saying, and the student found that talking to Good2Talk was better.
- Lee stated that he would be in favour of a probation year.
- Ibe stated that he didn't think people had enough knowledge of the crisis case management office. He explained that this is staffed by trained social workers and also hire student volunteers to help, and was established three years ago. Ibe stated that they have reached a state of conversation about their experiences with the service, and all should be respected and held in high regard, but they are in a position to make a decision. Ibe stated that he would be voting in favour of rescinding the policy. He explained that this debate was two years overdue, and it only happened this year after a robust service review. He added that if there are ever issues with EFRT and WGEN then it would be caught by the services committee.
- Obaidullah stated that one of the concerns in passing this over to an external organization was that they would be missing out on the data collection of student needs. She asked how would they get the data collected. Obaidullah ceded the rest of her time to Epifano.
- Epifano responded that they would be able to get the breakdown of data from SAP.

- D'Souza stated that in the memo it was stated that there were over 21 calls in the first four months of school of those who were thinking of suicide or had suicide ideation. He stated that if they expand it over eight months then that's 42 calls. D'Souza stated that he spoke about the situation of being a volunteer and not sure if being able to handle it, and that Jack wrote a letter about his experience, and Arnold spoke first-hand about her experience. He explained that these were not one-offs. He asked the Assembly if they were comfortable with 42 crisis situations happening to students, he stated that he wasn't and would be voting to rescind the policy.
- Raval apologized for the negative experiences with PSL, and understood that was the nature of support and not one single service was best for everyone. They stated that a lot of people have positive experiences with PSL, and that there was a key difference between peer support and PSL and that was the other services aren't anonymous. Raval stated that it was about having as many unique services as they could and looking into improving them. They added that something to also consider was that not everyone was a part of the decision-making process.

Moved by Anbalagan, **seconded** by Ibe that the Assembly recess for 10 minutes.

- Anbalagan stated that the conversation was getting loaded, but a break was needed.

Vote on Motion

In Favour: 17 Opposed: 8 Abstentions: 1
Opposed: Aoki, Sooriyakumaran, Stott, Zhang, Raez-Villaneuva, McNally, Ochocinski, Florean
Abstained: D'Souza
Motion Passes

Recessed at 9:32pm
Called to Order 9:43pm

CALL OF THE ROLL

Present: Anas, Anbalagan, Aoki, Arbess, Arnold, D'Souza, Deshpande, Florean, Gardner, Hackett, Ibe, Lao, Lee McNally, Nwamadi, Obaidullah, Ochocinski, Raez-Villaneuva, Sabra Salim, Sabrin Salim, Senthillmohan, Shin, Sooriyakumaran, Stott, Webb, Zhang

Absent Excused:

Absent Ahmed, Chestney, Fama, McGill, Patel, Szeliga, Vlatkovic

Late

Others Present: Brandon Malamis (Observer), Pranali Raval (PSL Assistant Director), Victoria Wong (Observer), Jasmine Bhatti (MSU Member), Anna Goshua (Observer), Aamna Abdullah (Observer), Divya Jain (Observer), Karina Nabieva (Observer), Kamini Persaud (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (incoming QSCC Coordinator), Zach Rudge (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (MSU Member), Haley Greene (MSU Member), Zienab Khawaja (Observer), Geneva Neal (Observer), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)

Chair Helen Zeng

- Sabra Salim stated that this conversation was going in circles.
- Raval stated that the Coordinator didn't have the opportunity to talk about her thoughts and that she didn't have the chance to comment on her part of the review. Raval stated that some previous volunteers were able to give their experiences but present ones cannot.

Moved by Florean, **seconded** by Stott to Call to Question

Vote on Call to Question

In Favour: 21 Opposed: 5 Abstentions: 0

Opposed: D'Souza, Raez-Villaneuva, Senthillmohan, Sabrin Salim, Lee
Motion Passes

Vote on Main Motion

Moved by Anbalagan, **seconded** by Anas that the Assembly rescind OPERATING POLICY – PEER SUPPORT LINE.

In Favour: 21 Opposed: 7 Abstentions: 0
Opposed: Sooriyakumaran, Obaidullah, Senthillmohan, Yun, Nwamadi, Lao, Lee
Motion Passes

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. OPERATING POLICY – INTERFAITH COUNCIL

Moved by Ibe that the Assembly approve OPERATING POLICY – INTERFAITH COUNCIL, as circulated.

- Ibe stated that a lot of work was done towards this, but that there were a few amendments to be made.

Amendment

Moved by Sabra Salim, **seconded** by Arbess to amend OPERATING POLICY – INTERFAITH COUNCIL with the circulated changes.

- Sabra Salim stated that they moved the religious chair to be non-voting, and that any religious group who would like to be a part of the council can now apply through the Chair and join as a non-voting member. She explained that this was more sustainable for the council moving forward.
- Ibe commended the work that Lightstone did on this operating policy.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Back to Main Motion

- Deshpande stated that as the past Diversity Services Director it was nice to see that there was now more for faith-based groups on campus. He commended everyone on their work.

Vote on Motion

Moved by Ibe that the Assembly approve OPERATING POLICY – INTERFAITH COUNCIL, as circulated and amended.

Passes Unanimously

TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Sunday, March 4, 2018
5:00pm
Council Chambers, GH 111

CALL OF THE ROLL

Present: Anas, Anbalagan, Aoki, Arbess, Arnold, D'Souza, Deshpande, Florean, Gardner, Hackett, Ibe, Lao, Lee McNally, Nwamadi, Obaidullah, Ochocinski, Raez-Villaneuva, Sabra Salim, Sabrin Salim, Senthillmohan, Shin, Sooriyakumaran, Webb, Zhang

Absent Excused:

Absent Ahmed, Chestney, Fama, McGill, Patel, Szeliga, Stott, Vlatkovic
Late

Others Present Brandon Malamis (Observer), PranaliRaval (PSL Assistant Director), Victoria Wong (Observer), Jasmine Bhatti (MSU Member), Anna Goshua (Observer), Aamna Abdullah (Observer), Divya Jain (Observer), Karina Nabieva (Observer), Kamini Persaud (AVP Internal Governance), Miranda Clayton (incoming QSCC Coordinator), Zach Rudge (MSU Member), Steffi Arkilander (MSU Member), Haley Greene (MSU Member), Zienab Khawaja (Observer), Geneva Neal (Observer), V. Scott (Recording Secretary)

Chair Helen Zeng

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Sabra Salim, **seconded** by Sabrin Salim that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Passes by General Consent

Adjourned at 9:56 pm

/vs



REPORT

From the office of the...

SRA Business Caucus

TO:	Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM:	Finlay McNally, Commerce Caucus Leader
SUBJECT:	SRA 17O Report
DATE:	February 25th, 2018

Dear esteemed Members of the Assembly,

We're back from the break, and ready for the final sprint to the finish line of this semester! January and February have been extraordinarily busy in the land of Commerce but we are looking forward to this upcoming month, as it is much less busy. In keeping with other SRA caucus best practices we plan to start our transition report soon, to ensure those who replace us are ready to do their jobs as best as possible in April.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Platters and Chatters!

We had a successful networking night on the first of February! It was called "Platters and Chatters" and it was hosted on campus, in the Phoenix. The event ran from five in the afternoon until seven, and had great attendance throughout. Professors and students snacked on the food we provided and met each other in a relaxing and welcoming environment. Many professors who teach all levels (1st to 4th) here at McMaster showed up, as well as the Commerce Academic Dean. To make this event happen we started talking to the DeGroote Commerce Society in November to establish the basic idea for the event. They booked the venue (the Phoenix) in late December once we had established a date. We emailed professors to invite them to the event. Finally, we promoted the event to Commerce students by running advertisements on our Facebook page, cross promoting with other Commerce events (like McMaster World Congress), as well as handing out some excellently designed rave cards to students leaving Commerce classes.

Special thank you to: The DeGroote Commerce Society, for working with us. Scott Robinson for the funding. The SRA members who gave us advice (Max Lightstone, Max Aoki, Sabra Salim, and David Lee). Tayel Shahzad the Underground designer for the graphic design in our promo material. The McMaster World Congress for cross-promoting our event during the event. And of course to Sophie, for spearheading and championing the project.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Finance Committee projects

Three of our caucus are working on some exciting Financial Committee projects. Liam and Finlay are working on the minimum wage report that the Finance Committee is preparing for the McMaster Students Union. Sophie has worked with Scott to make the financial information on the McMaster Student Union's page easier to understand. For SLEF we're in the process of investigating how funds are being spent, were focusing on the biggest projects first and working our way down. Progress is good, stay tuned for Scott Robinson's next report for more information!

Social Media Outreach

We continue to utilize our "SRA Commerce" Facebook page. We post MSU and DeGroot Commerce Society content, with the intent of promoting these things to students. We hope to increase our likes significantly up to 600 total, we also plan to have an average engagement of 1,500 engagements for the rest of the semester.

DeGroot Commerce Society Communication

We continue to maintain close communication with the DeGroot Commerce Society. We're looking into the possibility of having another event with them before the end of the year. Potentially exam review sessions for courses Commerce students typically struggle with (first year accounting, second year finance), although progress so far on this idea has been minimal.

Continuing to support "The Forge"

We continue to promote the Forge where we can. We use the SRA facebook page to promote their events in the hopes of catching the eye of students. We invite people to event pages the Forge creates on Facebook.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Paradise Catering

Finlay has been emailing Paradise Catering and lobbying for nutritional information to be posted on their menus. Communication with them is hard, and Finlay is currently waiting on Paradise Catering to respond to his request to arrange a meeting.

SUCCESSSES

Platters and Chatters!

The event was a huge success! From an operations perspective it was successfully run, did not go over budget and had great attendance. It totally satisfied our Caucus in that it promoted the SRA and was a successful event. It also contributed to our goal of strengthening our bond with the DeGroot Commerce Society, as we successfully planned and ran an event with their exec team.

DeGroot Commerce Society Communication

We have been going to events held by the DeGroot Commerce Society and representing the Student Representative Assembly there. Better communication with the DCS was identified as one of our priorities last year, and we have been ensuring that is a reality. To that effect, we just had a successful event with them (detailed above) and otherwise remain in communication.

Social Media Outreach

Selene continues to do a great job running the “SRA Commerce” Facebook page. Our metrics on the Facebook page continue to rise. Page views, page likes, page reach, and post engagements have all gone up in this past month. Page reach has seen the greatest jump, at 252% over last month, likely from our promotional efforts with “Platters and Chatters”.

PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN

The above projects and events cover much of our year plan. Some things however have not been covered, which will be mentioned here. As we have progressed through this year we have gotten a better sense of what we can and cannot accomplish in our role as members of the Student Representative Assembly. We have managed to accomplish much of our year plan, but some things manage to remain out of reach. Things like having more courses podcasted or having extra exam review sessions. While we believe these would be amazing to provide to our constituents, it is proving quite difficult to make them actually happen. If situations change we will happily continue to push for these, but as it stands we think our energy is better spent on outreach to the Commerce Community and the projects we are working on in our respective Standing Committees.

All the best,

Finlay McNally
Commerce Caucus Leader
McMaster Students Union
sracommerce@msu.mcmaster.ca



MEMO

From the...

Vice-President (Administration)

TO: Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Preethi Anbalagan, VP Administration
SUBJECT: Rescind Operating Policy - Peer Support Line
DATE: ~~February 21, 2018~~ [February 20, 2018](#)

Dear Student Representative Assembly,

This memo is meant to provide a detailed rationale as to why the members should rescind MSU Peer Support Line as a service of the organization. This past year, we have conducted a service review of Peer Support Line, consulted with an array of stakeholders, including members of the service, users of the service, and other external partners of the organization, for some guidance and insight. Through extensive and meaningful conversations, the Executive Board and the Services Committee are proposing that we rescind OPERATING POLICY - MSU PEER SUPPORT LINE.

As outlined in my delegation from the floor, Peer Support Line is no longer necessary to fill gaps within this institution, due to the emergence and heightened use of Student Assistance Program, COAST, Good2Talk, Ontario Victim Support Line, Assaulted Women's Helpline, etc. MSU services are created in the intention of filling perceived gaps. Those gaps of year's past are now filled. We should be enthusiastic that both the University and provincial government have responded to this need, so that we as a Assembly can serve students through different avenues and systems of support.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me ahead of the meeting.

Sincerely,

Preethi Anbalagan
Vice President (Administration)
vpadmin@msu.mcmaster.ca

Overview

The MSU Peer Support Line was established after Siobhan Stewart's presidential platform in 2013. Members of the Student Wellness Centre, University administration, student volunteers and members of the MSU came together to figure out the logistics, administration, and field any perceived challenges associated with the creation of the line. The pilot launch occurred in the second term of the 2012-2013 year, with roles created to best support and provide resources to individuals seeking the support line and those operating it.

The MSU Peer Support Line was created at a time where conversations surrounding mental health and illnesses were minimal, insufficient and barely scraped the surface of some of the nuances surrounding wellness and illness. There weren't many resources on campus that addressed how different communities experience and navigate mental illness in distinct ways. Specifically, there weren't anonymous support lines offered by the government or University for these conversations to be had and supported. However, as time progressed, new peer support services such as WGEN and Maccess were developed to address identity-based needs. Last year, the Student Wellness Centre received additional \$100,000 in funding to expand their resources such as number of counselors and wellness educators. With the construction of the Peter George Building, there will be an expanded floor dedicated to the Student Wellness Centre and with the Student Activity Building, even more space will be dedicated to peer support counseling.

Since PSL's inception, the government of Ontario has created similar services such as Good2Talk, in partnership with the Kids Help Phone, to provide a free and confidential helpline specifically designed for post-secondary students in Ontario. With the addition of more mental health resources, on-going advocacy and provision of similar phone-line services, it is my belief that MSU Peer Support Line has helped the sector recognize a gap and move towards offering essential services to address the need.

Service Review & Recommendations

Below are the *proposed* recommendations from the Services Committee:

1) *The MSU should no longer operate the Peer Support Line as a service*

Over the years, the Peer Support Line has received an increase in their number of crisis calls. The line, though not intended to be not trained to be, is turning into a crisis line, which is not what volunteers are equipped to handle. When the line was first introduced, there were not as many resources available to students as there are now. The service requires a crisis protocol that is suited for their volunteers, increased support available for volunteers and the PTM, as both are overworked and endure a large amount of emotional labour. The committee is unsure if the

necessary items that are required to keep the service sustainable, are actually feasible for the MSU. Ideally, in a few years, we will have a Peer Support Center in the Student Activity Building, along with an expanded Student Wellness Center in the Peter George Building, which are optimal and fall in line with the model of other universities.

2) The MSU should incorporate a Chat Line function into other peer support services

The chat function of the Peer Support Line was used more often than the call line. Adding this aspect of service to other peer support services, starting with SHEC, allows students to still access anonymous peer-based support when needed. After discussing with Pauline, this is feasible to implement on any services web page, and we can pilot it for a year to see whether or not it is beneficial, and what exactly it is being used for by students.

3) The MSU should collaborate with Good2Talk on increasing promotions on campus, and running campus events

Good2Talk is a service that is promoted around campus, however, moving forward they should have a larger presence on campus in order to interact with students and outreach their resources. Good2Talk is open to running events with the MSU and on campus for students throughout the year, increasing their presence could increase the usage and give students another option for anonymous support. Good2Talk is a bilingual and is staffed by qualified, paid professionals with education, professional experience and specialized training in either counselling or information and referral, which is overall more beneficial for students.

4) The MSU should increase promotions of the Student Assistance Program (SAP)

SAP has not been promoted nearly enough throughout the past two years. The numbers in terms of usage are not high, but many students still do not know that this service exists. SAP offers professionals support for students in many different areas and moving forward it should be promoted as much as any of our other MSU services.

5) The MSU should allocate a portion of the PSL budget to other peer support services

The committee believes that there may be an influx in usage of other peer support services with the elimination of PSL. The MSU should ensure these services are financially supported to continue operations, purchase additional resources, enhance training and improve events/campaigns to prepare for a potential increase in service usage.

Executive Board & Recommendations:

Executive Board, after extensive discussion, has adopted the direction to no longer operate Peer Support Line as a service for the **proposed reasons with some revision:**

1) The MSU Should no longer operate the Peer Support Line as an MSU service.

For reasons mentioned in the service review and because Peer Support Line has fulfilled its lifecycle. Some limitations to the service included the inability to offer extended counseling and with the introduction of Student Assistance Program to our Health Plan, it offers users opportunity to pursue extended support. In the Student Assistance Program 2016-2017 report, 80% of cases requested extended counseling completed through SAP

2) The MSU should create a working group to develop creative promotional strategies for existing support lines and services, such as the Student Assistance Program and Good2Talk.

This working group will aim to develop creative content and explore unique strategies to promote and advertise existing phone-lines that students can access. The group will consist of SRA members, MSU members, SWELL representatives and the Administrative Services Coordinator who will consult with the Communications Department to plan promotions.. Some promotional strategies may include window banners, Welcome Week distribution cards or Welcome Week wellness tents. Furthermore, the committee can be responsible for collaborating with Good2Talk, which offers an outreach team that can be requested for free to help support on-campus events, offer training workshops and various activities.

3) The MSU should allocate a portion of the PSL budget to this working group and other peer support services.

For reasons mentioned in the service review, to establish a budget to continue promotions of the Student Assistance Plan and other existing helplines, thus helping students access the various crisis and non-crisis help lines available.

3) The MSU will promote student volunteer opportunities within Good2Talk, such as their Student Ambassador Program.

Good2Talk offers involvement opportunities for students looking to contribute to the campus community through mental health and wellness initiatives, campaigns and events. The ambassadors complete training related to the phone-line and are required to have strong knowledge of mental health resources and supports on campus that they can promote. It's important to consider that Peer Support Line offered volunteer opportunities but through the promotion of this ambassador program, there will be continued opportunities to engage with student helplines.

4) The MSU should continue to develop and establish the Caring Communities Network alongside the Student Wellness Centre and their Wellness Educators.

This year, Chukky has developed and initiated the Caring Communities Network as a capacity-building program that exists to build capacity amongst students and community members to support and enhance student wellbeing. Whether it is a club or student society, a member is trained to be a Wellbeing Liaison that can provide support and referrals to students in need. This is incredibly important to highlight, as it takes a

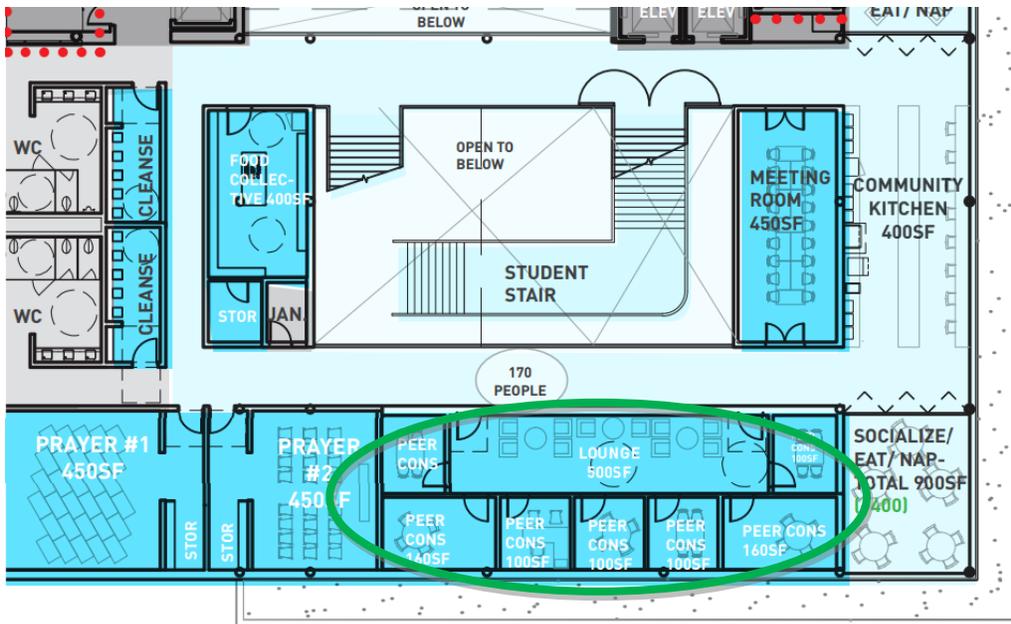
shared approach in providing wellness services and resources to students on campus. While it is still at its infancy, the MSU should invest resources and personnel into developing and honing this pilot program to ensure that peer support services continue to be offered.

5) The MSU should continue to offer identity-based peer support and look into other forms of identity-based support programming and initiatives.

In the service review, it is evident that PSL supported a variety of users and it's important that the MSU continue to offer identity-based support such as support sessions offered through Maccess, the Black & Gendered support group through WGEN, etc. Other initiatives that can be explored are integrating a peer support element to Diversity Services that address mental health and well-being of racialized folk, as well as strengthening our trans-related programming through QSCC. This is already being done under the advisement of members within QSCC, as well as the 2018/2019 QSCC coordinator who is assisting in the re-branding and renovations of the current QSCC space.

6) The MSU should continue to hone our Peer Support Department and explore the prospects of a Peer Support Centre in the Student Activity Building.

In the current floor plans, I've included a space (circled in green) that is modeled after Peer Support Centers within other student unions. A common lounge area is presented with individual office spaces that envelope the area, which can be used for one-on-one peer support and storage for our services. The idea of a Peer Support Centre is not foreign, and in fact, it has been long advocated for by our service managers and past Vice Presidents (Administration). Moreover, Peer Support Centers are a common trend across student unions, including McGill University, Queen's University, University of Alberta, University of Ottawa and Western University, to name only a few. However, there is still discussion to be had around this center's establishment. The MSU should continue to have these discussions, as finding a physical space is no longer the limitation as it is now with the lack of consistent space for PSL.



(Floor Plans as of November 20, 2017)

Moving Forward

The MSU Peer Support Line was created at a time where help lines did not exist and we needed an anonymous, confidential service that could receive calls and provide peer support to students through a wide range of issues that may be impacting their mental health and well-being, including depression, anxiety, loneliness, etc. However, over the years the Peer Support Line has unintendedly and inappropriately evolved into a crisis line that performs trauma intake and referral to other phone lines or services on campus. It's important to consider the immense demand and labor it places on our students who are bound to confidentiality and experiencing secondary traumatic stress. While the work of PSL speaks to our capacity for empathy, which is a strength, it's equally important to consider taking care of ourselves when taking care of others. With the emergence of support and crisis lines offered by trained and professional case workers, Peer Support Line is no longer needed as both the Government and University have stepped up to providing case management, professional counseling and help lines that prioritize the same level of confidentiality and anonymity.

This recommendation is certainly not to suggest that the MSU Peer Support Line has not done enough, but rather they have done the most and in doing so, have arrived at the end of their life cycle.



REPORT

From the office of the...
**The SRA Engineering
Caucus**

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly and Constituents
FROM: Abdul Stott, Engineering Caucus Leader
SUBJECT: SRA 170 Report
DATE: February 25, 2018

SRA Engineering hopes that everyone benefitted from Reading Week.

Progress on the Year Plan

Improved MES Relations

We have struggled as of late to maintain our record of attendance in MES Council meetings and communication with MES members. We hope to correct our shortcoming for the remainder of our term.

Facebook Presence Improvements

No changes in Facebook likes as of yet.

Past Events, Projects, and Initiatives

McMaster Engineering Co-op and Career Services Collaboration

The Engineering Co-op showcase successfully took place on January 16th and saw a great turnout. Thanks again to TJ for spearheading this collaboration.

Upcoming Events, Projects, and Activities

Engineering Swag Giveaway

To improve SRA awareness further, we hope to have our final swag giveaway towards the end of February and early March. This would be like the last I that it would be a Facebook giveaway that would garner page likes and awareness.

Current Challenges

We have tried our best to incorporate Josh Arbess, the newest member of SRA Engineering into our work. So far, he has done an outstanding job and we encourage him to keep up the good work!

As classes have progressed, mixed with other extracurricular involvement, it has become a challenge to meet regularly to organize initiatives. We have also fallen short on many of our planned initiatives, which would have required a few months of work and would be difficult to complete now.

I would personally like to apologize to the SRA and Board for lack of efforts and initiative on our part. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to ask.

Kind regards,
Abdul Stott
Engineering Caucus Leader
McMaster Students Union
sraeng@msu.mcmaster.ca



REPORT

From the office of the...

AVP Internal Governance

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: [Kamini Persaud, AVP Internal Governance](#)
SUBJECT: SRA 17L Report
DATE: 2018/02/15

Overview

Since the beginning of Term 2, the Internal Governance Committee has wrapped up on their Term 1 projects and slowly transitioning to new projects to take on. We welcomed our newest member, Sergio, to the committee. Our meeting structure, although changed a bit, has pivoted towards a more project focused model with individual check-ins and checkpoint focused communication

Current Projects

1. Interfaith Council
 - a. In the finishing and final stages of the Interfaith Council OP
 - b. The finished OP took consultation from MSU Clubs, Full-Time Staff, Diversity Services, SRA Members and the Interfaith Council itself.
2. SRA Job Description & Caucus Leader Job Description
 - a. The SRA Job Description has been properly formatted by Victoria and now presented for approval
 - b. Sabrin will have the Caucus Leader Job Description draft completed by the end of Reading Week
3. Bylaw 5 – Financial Affairs
 - a. As requested by VP Finance Tuba, Internal Governance will be exploring disciplinary additions to the Financial Affairs bylaw
 - b. Specifically, we are looking at groups that fall under this bylaw that have disregarded or have not complied with recommendations provided by the SRA.
 - c. We are currently brainstorming options and additions to the bylaw with Tuba, AVP Scott and Victoria

4. Athletic Council
 - a. Similar to the Presidents Council or Financial Affairs Council, Sergio and I will be working on developing a council with the captains of sports teams to further build the relationship between Athletics and Recreation and the MSU.
 - b. This project is currently being workshopped as we identify the need within the athletic community
5. Part-Time Issues Committee
 - a. Similar to the Full-Time Issues Committee and as per the request of MSU President Chukky, the Internal Governance Committee will be developing a committee specifically for part time employees to address their concerns and other relevant communications.
 - b. This committee will work as a forum for any issues and suggest resolutions.
 - c. This is currently being workshopped with John McGowen and Chukky.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Due to scheduling, the Internal Governance Committee has not been able to meet to have discussions. Thankfully, we have not had any need for in person discussions, but I foresee the committee needing to meet in the near future to discuss our upcoming projects and collaboration.

Yours in Governance,

[Kamini Persaud](#)

Associate Vice-President Internal Governance

McMaster Students Union

avpinternal@msu.mcmaster.ca

(647) 835 3358



REPORT

From the office of the...

AVP Services

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Kristina Epifano, Associate Vice-President Services
SUBJECT: SRA 17O Report
DATE: February 25, 2018

PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN

Service Reviews

Since my last report, we have completed 2 services reviews, putting our total at 3 so far for this year. We submitted our CLAY review to executive board in January with 6 recommendations from the services committee. The recommendations focused around ways to engage with the Hamilton community, increasing opportunities for professional development and growth for staff, and enhancing delegate engagement and overall experience. The recommendations were agreed upon amongst EB, and current PTM Rachel Persaud has been working with myself to implement these recommendations. Prior to the reading week, we had finished and submitted our Peer Support Line service review. The committee decided to give executive board two possible directions for the future of the service. Our PSL review was extensive as were our conversations with executive board, so I will be conducting some more research on specific recommendations requested by EB and reporting back to them.

Supporting PTMs

I have met with each PTM through our cluster meetings, and I have started with the second rounds of meetings this term. The cluster meetings have been going very well, and I believe have been beneficial for part-time managers. We focus on discussing the specific challenges they are facing and then as a team we discuss some possible solutions moving forward. It has been great to see the collaboration that has come through during these meetings, the PTM's have been great at supporting each other and opening up about their challenges.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Surveys

We have put out a total of 5 surveys which has been great work coming from the committee. Our surveys have gotten on average between 30 and 40 responses, but we do hope increase those numbers. The committee will be brainstorming ways to increase our outreach and numbers for our future surveys and the committee moving forward.

Service Reviews

We have completed our CLAY and PSL reviews, they have both gone through EB. I am working on implementing our recommendations into this year's operations of CLAY and continuing to do research for PSL moving forward.

Committee Meetings

In order to get the committee members more engaged and knowledgeable with our services, I have decided to make some changes to our committee meetings. I am inviting the PTM's of the services under review to attend some of our meetings so the committee can ask questions and work collaboratively with the PTM throughout the review. Lauren, Maccess Coordinator, came to our meeting earlier this month and gave an overview of the service and answered some questions. I will likely have her back when we begin to work on surveys to allow her to have some input with questions asked. The committee gave some positive feedback to this change and found it was helpful to learn about the service.

Hiring

I got to help out with some executive hiring which has been fun and awesome to see all the great student leaders we have around campus! I was able to help hire the first MACycle Shop Mechanic, which was especially exciting as I just created this new position after completing our MACycle review.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Service Reviews

We are at the beginning of our Maccess service review. Our next meeting will be discussing our goals for the surveys and brainstorm some questions. I am unsure whether or not we will have any more reviews this year, but our only goal right now is to have Maccess completed before the end of March.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Some challenges we are facing are promoting our external surveys. I was hoping that SRA members would have been more inclined to share and promote these surveys as they directly benefit the services we provide students, but that hasn't been the case. I am looking into new promo ideas and ways to outreach to a larger population in order to collect a range of data.

VOLUNTEERS (Commissioners only)

It was difficult at first to find a meeting time for term two, we finally settled on Fridays which is not ideal. Attendance hasn't been great lately, I imagine school is busy and people are potentially becoming less motivated so I am going to look into ways to improve committee motivation and engagement. Having PTM's attend meetings has been great for engagement, so I am hoping to come up with some more creative ideas to continue motivation.

SUCSESSES

Three service reviews completed and a fourth under way! I'm thankful to all PTM's for how great they have been with contributing to the review process. I have seen some great things come from our reviews and it's exciting to be able to see tangible changes being made in order to improve our services.

OTHER

Meetings are 530pm on Fridays, kind of sucky but I encourage you to come by and join us!

Best,

Kristina Epifano
Associate vice-President: Services
McMaster Students Union
avpservices@msu.mcmaster.ca



REPORT

From the office of the...

Vice-President (Administration) & CAO

TO:	Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM:	Preethi Anbalagan, Vice-President (Administration)
SUBJECT:	SRA Report
DATE:	February 19, 2018

Dearest assembly members,

Thank you once again for taking the time to read my report. In writing this final update, I'm realizing how fleeting (yet endless) this year has been. I stumbled across my first report and it felt like an archeological find. I was reading it with a strange, scholarly sense of removal because of how much has changed in the time that has passed.

In the past few months, I've learned quite a bit and the first thing is: being universally liked is not the aim of the game because management can (and should) never be perfect. The ways in which we fail can truly be illuminating. 95% of this role is making the tough calls (so, not at all an easy gig) but special thank you to Kamini, Kristina and Board for the support. It truly made the enormosity of the decisions I'm faced with more manageable. You're all uniquely annoying but absolutely necessary, thank you.

As always, should you have any questions - don't hesitate to drop a line.

Regards,

Preethi Anbalagan
Vice President Administration
McMaster Students Union
vpadmin@msu.mcmaster.ca

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Part-time Manager Hiring

December and January were predominantly taken up by hiring for part-time managers. A *special thank you* to Aarij, Lauren, Francis, David, Aqeel, Kamini and the Board for their patience and limitless enthusiasm throughout the hiring period. With their help and commitment, we have our Part-time Manager 2018-19 cohort hired (mostly)!

Start Date	Position	Name
November 1	CLAY Coordinator	Rachel Persaud
February 1	Horizons Coordinator	Joshua Yachouh
February 1	WWFC (staff)	Joshua Marando
March 1	MACycle Director	David Zaslavsky
March 1	QSCC Coordinator	Miranda Clayton
April 1	Shinerama Coordinator	Lauren Liu
May 1	MBB Director	Hannah Phillip
May 1	Macademics Coordinator	Angel Huang
May 1	Farmstand Director	Cassandra Massschelein
May 1	EFRT Director	Samantha Aung
May 1	Maroons Coordinator	Dan La France
May 1	CRO	Iku Nwosu
May 1	WGEN Coordinator	Jocelyn Heaton
May 1	SWHAT Coordinator	Sowmya Karthikeyan
May 1	SCSN Coordinator	Rohan Lohana
May 1	Spark Coordinator	Jane Luft
May 1	SHEC Coordinator	
May 1	Diversity Services Director	
May 1	Maccess Coordinator	
May 1	PSL Director	

Something that has been a personally challenging and systematically disadvantaging is the number of hours a VP Admin spends on hiring staff (on average, 2 to 3 months). While we should pride ourselves in expanding student employment opportunities, there should also be a conversation of the administrative labor required of one individual to be on every hiring board when staff is always expanding. It can profoundly limit the VP Admin's capacity to support their current staff, plan ahead for Welcome Week or perform responsibilities as it relates to being a member of the Board when they are physically displaced from their office for periods of time.

Welcome Week

Summary: Community Engagement strategic theme, Staple Events scheduling, Strategic Theme focus groups, Strategic Theme stewardship review

I'm putting it on the record - Community Engagement has been added as a new strategic theme! Welcome Week 2018 will incorporate programming and intentional efforts towards strengthening neighborhood relations, and engaging first years students in their capacity to be integral members of Hamilton community. The following targets were approved by WWAC:

- ✓ Students recognize their significance within the greater Hamilton community and their contribution to providing social and cultural diversity
- ✓ Students will engage with local businesses and community organizations in Hamilton
- ✓ Students will develop interest in opportunities discovering their city
- ✓ Students will create meaningful connections with their neighboring community
- ✓ Students will be supported to engage in off-campus activities and access off-campus resources
- ✓ Students will understand importance of being respectful, responsible, and contributing members of the local community

This is exciting for a myriad of reasons but notably for how well it complements the institution and our organization's on-going community engagement efforts.

Regarding, staple events - the recommendation for WWPIC was to design and develop a Welcome Week schedule that will not change year after year by selecting events that can logistically replicate itself. This has circumvented a lot of our pre-existing challenges with overlapping events and scheduling. Kamini has been a gem and has been attending meetings with me and on my behalf, which has helped immensely.

In January, I held two focus groups for strategic themes to discuss improvements, ideas on meeting targets and how to newly integrate the theme of Community Engagement. With 41 submissions and 70-80 individuals engaged in discussion - I collated the data into a report that was reviewed at the WWAC level. To summarize, advertisement and promotion of events could have been stronger, the themes should have a year-long element, and programming should highlight existing resources and support to access post-Welcome Week.



Term 2 Check-ins

Early January, I scheduled one-on-ones with part-time managers to go over written submissions in their evaluations and discuss year-plan progress. I received positive feedback from these check-ins because they felt as though revisiting the year-plan provided them an opportunity to refocus and re-center themselves.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

QSCC

In the absence of a coordinator, I've been making myself available to the QSCC executives and volunteers as a resource to use. With Queer History Week soon approaching, I hope to check-in frequently with the execs to make sure they're doing well and are supported. Prior to the coordinator being hired, myself and Ryan had started conversations surrounding QSCC and the potential for what it could be. I've been having meetings alongside the incoming coordinator on re-branding QSCC, as well as plans for physical renovations.

The idea is still at infancy, but I'd like to see us take more of a holistic approach to trans-inclusion within the organization. This includes but goes beyond training our full-time staff through the 519 Community Centre. Miranda will be assuming her role in early March to assist with a Community Needs Assessment of QSCC, so that we can better support and deliver programming to the community QSCC is meant to serve.

Peer Support Field Trip

When our peer support staff are completely hired - I'm hoping to plan a field trip to Ryerson Students' Union's Equity Service Centers with the incoming and outgoing part-time managers so they can meet their counter parts and field questions they may have. The Student Activity Building has space that is modelled after a Peer Support Centre, and this will be a great opportunity to do some

research and engage in dialogue that can better inform decisions regarding the use of the space.

PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN

In the forthcoming reports, I will be structuring my updates in table format for the following components: training, supporting the SRA, supporting PTMs, supporting AVPs, hiring practices, human resources, welcome week.

- SRA Onboarding Package *completed*
- Summer MSU Orientation *completed*
- Summer Specialized Training *completed*
- Clustering Platforms *completed*
- SRA Transition Training *completed*
- One-on-ones *completed*
- Staff meetings *completed*
- TRRA *completed*
- Opportunities to Lead *completed*

OTHER

I sobbed at Daniel Caesar live (thank you Western USC), and sobbed harder when courtesy cards ran out

(fret not, I printed more).



OPERATING POLICY - INTERFAITH COUNCIL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To bring together representatives from student faith-based associations at McMaster University;
- 1.2. To work to address issues of common concern that affect the greater McMaster community;
- 1.3. To build connections between students of different spiritual affiliations, furthering the goal of a more unified campus community;
- 1.4. To facilitate and encourage religious dialogue within the McMaster community.

2. MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1. The Interfaith Council shall include one (1) president or representative from the following groups, who shall be voting members:
 - 2.1.1. Catholic Students Association;
 - 2.1.2. Cooperative of Indigenous Studies Students and Alumni;
 - 2.1.3. Hillel (Jewish Students Association);
 - 2.1.4. Hindu Students Association;
 - 2.1.5. Muslim Students Association;
 - 2.1.6. Orthodox Christian Students Association;
 - 2.1.7. Power to Change;
 - 2.1.8. Sikh Students Association.
 - 2.1.9. The Chair of Religious Clubs from the Clubs Executive Council;

Commented [AIGKP1]: As per request of Sabra

- 2.2. The Council shall include the following non-voting members:

- 2.2.1. The Diversity Services Director (Chair);
- 2.2.2. The Ecumenical Chaplin;
- 2.2.3. The Diversity Services Assistant Director;
- 2.2.4. One (1) SRA member.
 - 2.2.4.1. The SRA member shall be elected to the Council no later than April 30;

Commented [VSASC2]: My suggestion is that, if the Div Services Director cannot do this b/c of availability, make it the Asst. Div Director or have it be elected from within. The Chair is expected to do a lot of admin work.

3. OPERATIONS

3.1. The Council shall meet no less than:

- 3.1.1. One (1) time between May 1 and August 31;
- 3.1.2. Two (2) times between September 1 and November 30, including once in September;
- 3.1.3. Two (2) times between January 1 and March 31.

3.2. The term of the Council shall be from May 1 to March 31;

3.3. The Chairperson shall:

- 3.3.1. Call and Chair the meetings of the Interfaith Council.
- 3.3.2. Be responsible for booking meeting rooms, assign action items, distribution of previous meeting minutes and the meeting agendas, and provide any other administrative support to the council as deemed necessary;
- 3.3.3. Serve as the central contact person for the committee;
- 3.3.4. Work with the voting members to develop a transition report for the next years committee.

3.4 Quorum shall be two thirds majority, and votes shall pass solely by unanimous consent of the voting members present.

Commented [VSASC3]: Committees of the MSU usually don't run after March 31, due to PTMs no longer being paid, and SRA members no longer being a rep.

Commented [VSASC4]: This doesn't need to be put under operations. I put it in 3.3.1

Commented [VSASC5]: Very important.

4. ACTIVITIES

4.1. The Council shall:

- 4.1.1. Promote the RISO Policy and the accommodations therein;
- 4.1.2. Offer recommendations to the McMaster Students Union and University on relevant issues and policies;
- 4.1.3. Host events such as social gatherings, educational forums, and panels;
- 4.1.4. Other tasks as deemed relevant by the Council.

4.2. The Council shall host at least one town hall meeting on religious and spiritual issues per academic year;

4.3. The council Chair or a council representative shall report on the activities of the Interfaith Council to the Student Representative Assembly at the fourth (4th) meeting of the Fall and Winter semesters.

Commented [VSASC6]: Which union? Which University?