



REPORT

From the office of the...

Vice-President (Education)

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Fawziyah, Vice-President (Education)
SUBJECT: SRA 20D Report
DATE: Sunday July 12, 2020

Dear Members of the Assembly,

I hope the first few months of your new roles aren't too odd being conducted over Teams, Slack and Facebook! The last few months of this role for me have been ever-changing, yet continuously rewarding. Getting a rhythm for working at home in May was difficult, but with consistency and support from the BoD - getting in to a work from home rhythm has been possible.

I am looking forward to the ongoing conversations, advocacy and idea-sharing that can be carried out vped@msu.mcmaster.ca.

Below I will outline what I have been working on over the last few months, trying to keep it succinct and clear!

PROGRESS ON YEAR PLAN

Getting started on the platform in the midst of a global pandemic was interesting, this position can show you that what you have planned for a week, how much time there is in a given week as well as things that come up over the course of the week can make objectives feel very fragmented! However, I am happy with how available various groups, individuals and stakeholders have been even in the midst of this pandemic. Objectives are going steady, Teams and Zoom are getting their fill of use from our BoD, and hopeful where the objectives will go!

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Welcome Conference

OUSA Welcome Conference was a successful two-day conference introduction to our provincial advocacy body, we were able to meet with various stakeholders and groups in the post-secondary sector as well as gain a better understanding of OUSA as an organization. Through this conference we received advocacy training, were able to discuss student priorities with stakeholders from groups such as OCUFA, eCampus Ontario etc... and connect as a Steering Committee.

Strategic Conference + Advocacy Priorities

OUSA Strat Con was a three-day conference that allowed OUSA's steering committee to receive consultation training, discuss ways to unsettle the status quo of OUSA as well as set the provincial advocacy priorities for the coming year.

The year prior I was able to pitch Racial and Religious Equity as OUSA's first policy that speaks to racialized student advocacy priorities, keeping to the spirit of this we were able to set racial equity as an advocacy priority for OUSA's steering committee for the first time this year. In addition to this, we have set Student Financial Aid, Mental Health as well as Quality of Education as our priorities for the year.

Trainings

I've been able to conduct three advocacy training this summer, which included training for PTMs, the SRA and AVPs - the BoD worked together to carry out all three training sessions and they were successfully carried out online via Microsoft Teams.

Ed Team Operating Policy Changes

Through the Executive Board, I have updated the Job Description and Operating Policy for the past Advocacy Coordinator Position, now Project and Campaign Coordinator to better reflect the nature of the role within the Education team!

Sustainability

Currently, Giancarlo and I are working with folks from the Academic Sustainability Program's office to begin working together on sustainability initiatives for students to become sustainability leaders on campus. Additionally, Giancarlo and I are working on an MSU Sustainability Position Paper that will help align our sustainability efforts across our university advocacy, as well as the sustainability initiatives being worked on through the MSU's Sustainability Committee.

Security Services and Anti-Racism Statement

Over the last few weeks, hundreds of students have come forward voicing their concern over the presence of Glenn De Caire on campus. As VP Ed, I fully and completely agree and the BoD stands in solidarity with students who have voiced their concerns. As folks know we have passed a motion at the SRA level calling for the removal of both Glenn De Caire and the Special Constables program. We have been in contact with the AVP Equity, Arig as well as the AVP Facility Services, Debbie Martin to begin the work on this for the upcoming year.

Additionally, the BoD worked together to create a statement on anti-racism and how to tackle inequity within the MSU - this is a priority for the BoD this year and we will continue creating actionable change following the statement.

Open Educational Resources

We have begun work on OER's through the Universities OER committee, through the committee we have begun work on projected projects pitched by professors and faculty members for the coming year. These will include course creation, project based OER creation as well as folks that are going to review and the OERs.

Mental Health Advocacy

We have been in conversations with SWC Director, Rosanne Kent as to how mental health advocacy can be strengthened for the coming year - beginning with establishing the changes and critiques outlined in the MSU's Health Services Review.

Teaching and Learning Steering Committee + Academic Advocacy

The Teaching and Learning Steering Committee has been a great avenue to begin advocating on decolonization as an academic priority for teaching and learning for McMaster moving forward, I've been able to continue these conversations with the Vice-Provost Faculty, Kim Dej in hopes of finding ways to incorporate decolonizing course and syllabi construction cross faculties.

Additionally, Kim Dej and I have been corresponding regarding privacy concerns in regards to proctoring tools and the use of VPNs for international students - conversations for this advocacy priority are ongoing.

CAF Agreement

Work continues on reviewing the current CAF agreement, ongoing!

OUSA Advocacy

Within OUSA have begun advocating for OSAP changes and increasing funding for post-secondary institutions in hopes that students will be able to receive increased and earlier OSAP funding, as well as a potential decrease in tuition through provincial investments in the post-secondary sector.

We also plan to begin rigorous advocacy through our 4 priorities for the coming year, Racial Equity, Student Financial Aid, Mental Health as well as Quality of Education.

SoBi

We have submitted two delegations in support of our City Councillor, Maureen Wilson. The first outlined the MSU's support for the continuation of the SoBi bike share program to City Council in hopes of keeping the program for students. We have also been in fragmented correspondence with our City Councillor Maureen, and continue to correspond with her!

Police Defunding Delegation

The second delegation that we have sent to City Council was in support of Maureen Wilson and police defunding at the Hamilton level, our goal was to outline our stance regarding policing and the disproportionate policing of racialized and marginalized folks and communities in Hamilton.

Landlord Accountability

We have begun conversations with the University to begin incorporating landlord accountability tools onto the Housing and Conference services sections of the McMaster website, conversations are ongoing but hopeful for this objective!

Housing and Community Engagement

We have had advocacy meetings with various stakeholders in the Hamilton community to discuss city and youth engagement, as well as the needs regarding housing for students in the future moving forward post COVID-19, conversations are ongoing but excited for where engagement can take our advocacy.

UCRU

We have begun working with our Federal Advocacy body UCRU, priorities for the year continue to be determined however we have begun advocacy for increased support for transit municipally.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Town Hall with MPP, Sandy Shaw

Through advocacy conversations with our MPP, Sandy Shaw regarding student concerns and how to best represent them in provincial parliament, we have come to the idea of hosting a Town Hall. In this Town Hall, student will be able to bring their concerns directly to Sandy Shaw, who will then be able to bring students concerns forward directly to the provincial finance committee as well as provincial parliament to ensure that she is fully representing students concerns in the Hamilton community but also so that student voices are heard directly to the provincial government.

Campus Policing and Defunding the Police Panel

We will be hosting panelists from campus and the broader community members in the coming weeks to open up conversation with students. More information to come!

Goal Planning Session with the Education Team

Following yearplan creation with the AVPs, we will begin a high-level goal planning session - this will include mapping out the projects for the entire year between all of the Ed Team AVPs as well as more fully solidifying task division in terms of MSU Policy work, continued projects for the year as well as more closely cataloguing our advocacy priorities for the coming year.

Planning for Anti-Racism Initiatives

Anti-Racism is an essential ongoing project for racialized students at McMaster, this will take place in various ways - I will be continuing our advocacy regarding the removal of Glenn De Caire as well as the phasing out of the Special Constables program, as well as have been working with PTMs to address concerns within their respective services. Additionally, with setting both the racial equity advocacy priority and racial equity policy for OUSA, I plan to bring racial equity as an ongoing advocacy, consultation and policy priority within OUSA. Moving forward however, the AVP PFA alongside myself and Giancarlo are moving for an anti-racism conference. In collaboration with the AVP UA, we will begin tackling various anti-racism initiatives within the university, this includes my work with the EDI Steering Committee, increasing advocacy collaboration with identity-based services and students associations such as ex. Diversity Services or the Black Students Association.

MEETINGS AND COMMITTEES

Outlining the various meetings and committees that I sit on; internally and externally, I attend BoD meetings, Executive Board Meetings, Open Educational Resources Committee, LinkedIn Learning Committee, EDI Steering Committee, OUSA Steering Committee Meetings, UCRU Board Meetings, Advocacy Committee Meetings, Check-in Meetings with Education Team AVPs, Teaching and Learning Steering Committee, Student Services Advisory Committee, Committee on Multi-Modal Transportation for Healthy Communities as well as advocacy meetings as they are scheduled/come up through out a given week!

CURRENT CHALLENGES

A current challenge is always trying to juggle the ever-growing list of responsibilities with the position particularly balancing University and Municipal advocacy as well as balancing the responsibilities of our external advocacy. Additionally, trying my best to stay connected with both full time and part time stuff through this new online world - however online socials and check-ins have been helpful and aid the feeling of connectivity!

Best,



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