**YEAR PLAN**

MSU SRA Commerce

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2021-2022

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OFFICE OF THE COMMERCE CAUCUS LEADERS INTRODUCTION

The 2021-2022 Commerce Caucus is excited to implement our ideas and goals into the upcoming school year. Our goals are set to better serve the lives of students at McMaster and create a strong community. With the Covid-19 pandemic, our past school year was very different from other years. Students have had to adapt to an online learning environment and practice new methods of studying. This challenge is one that we may still face this year. With this, we plan on providing more support to our students by increasing the use of our Instagram page. Our presence on social media will serve as a direct line of communication between the Commerce Caucus and the faculty of Business.

When our students voice their thoughts, opinions, or concerns, it is important that we actively listen to and address these matters. Through engaging with our faculty over our SRA Commerce Instagram page, students will feel respected. Our Caucus values the voice of our students, thus we plan on using this understanding to create a stronger community at McMaster. Through partnering with a multitude of clubs and societies, we can thoroughly engage and raise awareness as one. With the return to campus, students will likely feel an array of emotions. This will include being overwhelmed with a new environment and facing new challenges. As a Caucus, we aspire to create an easier transition by providing support and addressing any concerns in the months leading up to September and beyond. With this, we can successfully support our faculty and create an environment where students can comfortably grow. Overall, our goals and objectives presented in our year plan will provide students with a stronger sense of unity while also properly engaging our faculty’s concerns.

Sincerely,

The 2021-2022 Commerce Caucus

**Goals**

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| **Objective 1** | **Social Media Expansion** |
| Description | Through the use of the SRA Commerce instagram page, we have the ability to increase our awareness and engagement with students. We plan on using our instagram page as a method of communication with students while also addressing current MSU topics. |
| Benefits | This page will serve as a line of communication between SRA Commerce members and students within our faculty. This page will allow student voices to be heard and their concerns to be addressed directly. We will have the ability to reach a greater number of students and work together to create a safer and more comfortable environment. |
| Difficulties | Gaining followers and spreading the word of our instagram page may be difficult. However, we plan on overcoming this by posting on our personal accounts and partnering with our faculty clubs.  Consistency will be difficult, however, similar to the year before us, we plan on creating weekly or biweekly posting schedules and more engaging content to entertain more people on our page. |
| Long-term implications | Keeping the instagram page up and running for years to come. However, we believe that this page will engage the commerce faculty, keeping students informed and creating a space where their voices are heard. This will create more transparency between the commerce caucus with the students and therefore more would be willing to better their experience at McMaster. |
| How? | To kickstart the posting on our social media pages, we will mainly focus on the @sra.commerce instagram page. We will have introductory posts from our caucus this year and then will also be posting fun and engaging posts to gain followers and more reach in the commerce community. We will be regulating this by sticking to a weekly or biweekly posting schedule and sharing posts from our faculty.  Examples of Instagram posts:   * Day in the life of the commerce caucus (us 4 would get one day each to do a takeover) * Frequent posting of updates from SRA   Examples of instagram stories:   * Asking questions poll (once a week to engage with the students and help out if they are facing a problem, etc.) * Advertising of SRA meetings (to help students be apart of meeting and to help with our transparency effort)   Additionally, we will be available for all inquiries, questions, concerns through a platform people are more comfortable with so we get higher engagement from commerce students. |
| Partners | **Commerce Society Clubs like, DWIB, DCS, DAA, etc.** |

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| **Objective 2** | **Providing Mental Health Support for Students with Return to Campus** |
| Description | As we consider the upcoming year, we understand that we are facing conditions that are uncertain to us. However, I do believe it is safe to say that we can finally see the dust settling in the distance. With this in mind, we can make no guarantees of what transitioning back to in-person will look like. We can only guarantee that we will do everything in our power to ensure that this transition is graceful, considered, and does not inhibit your education. Our prioritizations will focus upon preserving and safeguarding both student’s physical and mental health. |
| Benefits | Through supporting our students in their Return to Campus, we will be able to connect with our community and develop a seasoned understanding of their needs at this time. From being involved in the past year’s Return to Campus committees, it is prevalent that a multitude of concerns exist in returning to campus. While the university has spent many months trying to navigate this, we believe it will only be an evolving situation. One which will require proactive and thoughtful action, based on student needs and concerns. |
| Difficulties | With the past year being conducted online and the current public health orders, our reach is limited by our own personal connections. As student opinion is a necessary component in establishing a smooth transition to campus we will need to ensure diverse thoughts and perspectives are heard. Through the SRA’s social media expansion, we hope to only further increase our accessibility to the student body and combat this issue. |
| Long-term implications | We understand that this pandemic has altered many of our lives in ways that will not change due to restrictions lifting. This is why aiding students right now as we transition out of this crisis will be key. Throughout this year, I believe our continued support for students will benefit students in the long run through aiding them in their pursuit of education. However, I also believe this will allow us the opportunity to identify what long-term implications students face from this pandemic and how we can better empower them through this. |
| How? | Here are a few ways in which we hope to attain this:   * Continuously working and communicating with BoD, McMaster and the DeGroote Faculty around Return to Campus plans, contingencies, and supports. * Engaging with and resuming work previously done with various focus groups to ascertain student needs and concerns * Providing open lines of communication directly to SRA representatives * Responding to arising concerns and needs on both a macro and micro level to ensure long-term concerns and needs are addressed properly and brought to light. * Providing education and awareness around the various mental health implications that stem from the collective trauma experienced by students from the pandemic.   + This will include increasing accessibility and awareness of both on and off campus support. |
| Partners | **DCS, DeGroote, McMaster, Student Wellness Centre** |

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| **Objective 3** | **Participating in and Promoting the Student Life Enhancement Fund (SLEF)** |
| Description | The Student Life Enhancement Fund provides seed capital and financial support for initiatives that demonstrate a commitment to improving and enhancing student life. The SLEF fund is approximately $100,000 which, with the right idea, can make a large, positive impact for the many years to come. With such potential, it is shocking how little promotion it gets. This year, we hope to advertise it well enough so that more students get involved by submitting their own ideas. Not only that, our caucus plans to submit at least 3 well-thought-out ideas of our own. |
| Benefits | The foundation of the SLEF fund is based on improving student life at McMaster University. By promoting and participating in this fund, we are able to maximize that idea of bettering student life. The more submissions and student voters there are as a result of our efforts, then the more likely a better idea is funded. |
| Difficulties | As a result of the pandemic, there will be significantly less foot traffic on campus in the Fall term (during which the idea submissions take place). This means our main promotion efforts will have to be conducted online, specifically through social media. Our Business Caucus Instagram account has a very little following, meaning that we will have to reach out to account owners that have large followings to promote it. |
| Long-term implications | The long-term applications of this objective rely on the chosen idea. Most ideas have long-term benefits that support future students (such as the McMaster Teaching and Community garden), but there are some that are just events. |
| How? | The participation of the SLEF fund will be achieved by holding a meeting every other week leading up to the end of the SLEF fund idea submission deadline, in which we discuss and brainstorm ideas that we could potentially submit.  The promotion of SLEF will be achieved by:   * Putting posters up in high-foot traffic areas of the McMaster campus * Posting through our Business Caucus Instagram account * Asking other clubs and caucuses to post about the SLEF fund * Entering classes (either in-person or virtually) before they start and discussing the fund |
| Partners | To ensure what we promote is accurate, we would like to work alongside the group that administers the fund, the Student Services Committee (SSC). As well, depending on our ideas, we would like to work with different departments in MSU services or Student Affairs. When it comes to promotion, we would like to work alongside other caucuses like the Engineering Caucus and the Health Sciences caucus. |

**Long-term planning**

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| **Overarching vision 1** | **Integration Between SRA and DCS** |
| Description | The SRA and the DCS have been disconnected and uncoordinated in the past. This year, with operating online and in person on campus we need to be able to collaboratively work, and increase engagement with both. The DCS and SRA must work together to ensure that all Commerce students will have the best experience possible during the 2020-2021 school year. |
| Benefits | The more engagement we receive from students will lead us to make student life easier and better suited for commerce students taking in account their needs and wants as a community. MSU and DCS would get the support of each other to make events more attainable and overall increase interest in the MSU and SRA as a whole allowing commerce students to be actively participating in MSU initiatives |
| Year 1 | Improve DCS-SRA relations by meeting with current DCS executives and creating a joint plan for the 2021-2022 school year, with events that involve both parties to increase outreach for both the SRA and the DCS. Communication is key so we will do our part in making sure this is carried forward with DCS and SRA in the upcoming years |
| Year 2 | Ideally, the previous relationship will have its effects carry over as the turnover from the 2021-2022 DCS team to the 2021-2022 DCS team takes place. The members of the 2022-2023 Commerce Caucus will be able to use their positions to benefit the DCS and Commerce students. |
| Year 3 | At this point a working relationship should be established between both parties, and both parties can work towards a similar, shared goal. |
| Partners | **Degroote Commerce Society and DeGroote School of Business** |

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| **Overarching vision 2** | **Bettering the Student Life at McMaster University** |
| Description | With the past year being online, students deserve a great experience for their return to campus for this year and the coming years. In order to deliver them that experience, we are striving to not only help them with their transition back to in-person through objective two, but also through ensuring the SLEF fund is used to its potential in objective three. |
| Benefits | The benefits of this vision are pretty simple; improving the mental health and overall content of McMaster students by providing the necessary support, experiences, and opportunities during their years at McMaster University. |
| Year 1 | Providing students with the right tools and aid to assist in their transition back to McMaster University. Ensure the SLEF fund is used to its potential and a great idea is chosen. |
| Year 2 | The SLEF fund winning idea is underway in its construction/implementation. |
| Year 3 | The SLEF fund winning idea is done, introduced and is positively contributing to McMaster's students' experiences. |
| Partners |  |

**GOALS to strive for**

**List 5 things you would like to have prepared before the beginning of September**

* Launch our social media campaign and introduce ourselves to the Commerce faculty
* Begin partnering with DCS and other club members to better engage with students and advocate for their concerns
* Layout our plans for student funding for Covid-19 recovery through communicating with the BoD
* Provide education and awareness around the mental health implications that stem from the collective trauma experienced by students from the pandemic through our Instagram page
* Reach out to the Student Services Committee to get more information on the Student Life Enhancement Fund

**List 5 things you would like to have completed during the fall term (1st)**

* Have a direct line of communication with commerce students and create an inclusive and welcoming environment
* Create polls and surveys for students which will allow us to better address their concerns and advocate on their behalf
* Follow through on in-person or online events created through our partnerships/integration with DCS
* Begin social media campaign for SLEF
* Submitted at least 3 proposals for SLEF
* Provide support for the return to campus through educating our faculty, addressing their questions, and resuming work previously done with various focus groups to ascertain student needs and concerns

**List 5 things you would like to have completed during the winter term (2nd)**

* Ensure students feel supported through tracking polls from our Instagram page and engaging with our faculty both online and in-person
* Completed documents detailing the evolving mental health situation at McMaster resulting from the pandemic including highlighted issues
* Compose list of resources for current and future students + SRA representatives to deal with mental health contingencies created by the pandemic
* Continue marketing for SLEF campaign winners and support them in the pursuit of their goals to better student life
* Complete SRA team reports and transition documents

**Master Summary**

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| May | * Develop an understanding of our roles and responsibilities as SRA Commerce Caucus members * Start to build relationships with other SRA members |
| June | * Elect the Board of Directors * Start to develop a year plan and clear objectives that we wish to be completed by the year’s end |
| July | * Continue working on and developing the Commerce Caucus year plan * Begin partnering with other clubs to help strengthen our awareness and collaboration * Launch our social media campaign |
| August | * Begin partnering with the DCS to enhance collaboration and engagement * Create goals and objectives that we wish to achieve with our partners |
| September | * Continue to connect with students through our Instagram page, this will allow for the voices and concerns of students to be heard from the start of the year * Implement our student recovery fund * Start providing support for the return to campus through educating students about both on-campus and off-campus resources |
| October | * Increase engagement with the Commerce faculty through doing events on our Instagram page such as a day in the life of a commerce caucus members and frequent post * Begin creating polls and surveys regarding student concerns, this will be an area of focus as we will provide students with the option to voice any of their current thoughts * Continue with possible in-person events we have planned for the support in the return to campus to help engage students and create a more welcoming environment |
| November | * Track the polls and surveys we receive through our Instagram page and begin addressing any student concerns through events, stories, or posts * Continue working on the integration between DCS and SRA |
| December | * Focus on creating resources that help students during either in person or online examinations * Continue to advocate for students |
| January | * Create possible in-person events to increase engagement with students |
| February | * Continue launching polls and surveys so that we can better advocate for student concerns |
| March | * Create turnover package for 2022-2023 |
| April | * Complete turnover to SRA 2022-2023 |